This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

Announcement by Mitchell Kennerley

THE MODERN DRAMA SERI

EDITED BY EDWIN BJÖRKMAN

***Each volume uniform cloth binding, prices various, from* $1.00 *to* $**

Considering the western world as a whole, the dramatic production of the last fifty be held to equal, and perhaps to surpass, that of any preceding period. And this prod plays an essential unity of spirit and manner that heralds the final disappearance c barriers in literature. To make the American public free of this common storehouse and beauty is the object underlying the Modern Drama Series, which aims at appe equal force to scholar and layman. It will gradually bring translations from every lan has produced a contemporary drama worthy of notice. It will also include English and plays of exceptional significance. The editor of the series has within a few years mad tion for himself as a farsighted student of modern literature and as a successful transla those chosen to assist him, three qualities will be exacted: familiarity with the langu original, artistic command of the English language, and ability to grasp not only the the spirit of the work to be transplanted. Each volume will have an introduction of i rather than critical nature and a chronological list of plays by the same author.

The following ten volumes of this series will be ready for publication during t Fall: ask your bookseller for a detailed prospectus.

I. (Danish) KAREN BORNEMAN: LYNGGAARD & CO. Two HJALMAR BERGSTROM. *Translated, with an introduction by Edwin Björ*

II. (French) THE VULTURES: THE WOMAN OF PARIS: THE M GO-ROUND. Three plays by HENRY BECQUE. *Translated, with an tion by Freeman Tilden.*

III. (Norwegian) PEER GYNT. A dramatic poem by HENRIK IBSEN. *lated in the original metre by R. Ellis Roberts. With an introduction and*

IV. (Italian) THE STRONGER: LIKE FALLING LEAVES: S GROUND. Three plays by GIUSEPPE GIACOSA. *Translated, with an tion by Edith and Allan Updergraff.*

V. (English) THE WIDOWING OF MRS. HOLROYD. A drama acts by D. H. LAWRENCE.

VI. (American) PAPA. An amorality in three acts by ZÖE AKINS.

VII. (American) MR. FAUST. A verse play in five acts by ARTHU SON FICKE.

VIII. (American) THE RED LIGHT OF MARS, or A Day in the the Devil. A philosophical comedy by GEORGE BRONSON HOWARD.

IX. (Russian) THE LIFE OF MAN: KING HUNGER: SAVVA plays by LEONID ANDREYEV. *Translated, with an introduction by Thoma*

X. (German) THE LONELY WAY: INTERMEZZO: COUNTESS Three plays by ARTHUR SCHNITZLER. *Translated, with an introdu Edwin Björkman.*

Ask your bookseller to send you the volumes of the Modern Drama

PROPERTY OF
University of Michigan Libraries
1817
ARTES SCIENTIA VERITAS

THE MODERN DRAMA SERIES
EDITED BY EDWIN BJÖRKMAN

KAREN BORNEMAN : LYNGGAARD & CO.
TWO PLAYS BY HJALMAR BERGSTRÖM

KAREN BORNEMAN
LYNGGAARD & CO.

TWO PLAYS BY

HJALMAR BERGSTRÖM

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

EDWIN BJÖRKMAN

NEW YORK
MITCHELL KENNERLEY
MCMXIII

COPYRIGHT RESERVED BY THE GYLDENDAHL PUBLISHING COMPANY

COPYRIGHT, 1913, BY MITCHELL KENNERLEY

ALL DRAMATIC RIGHTS RESERVED BY EDWIN BJÖRKMAN

Z39.28
B499ka
xZ63

THE·PLIMPTON·PRESS
NORWOOD·MASS·U·S·A

General Library
Gift
Clements Lib.
5-10-51

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	vii
CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF PLAYS BY HJALMAR BERGSTRÖM	xvii
KAREN BORNEMAN	1
LYNGGAARD & CO.	93

INTRODUCTION

DENMARK was the first Scandinavian country to have a drama of its own. Holberg (1684–1754) has justly been called a "Northern Molière." Oehlenschläger (1779–1850) has, perhaps with less justice, been classed with Schiller. In their own day, and for a long time afterward, those pioneers stood wholly alone. But it was nevertheless on the foundations laid by them that the modern Scandinavian drama, with its world-encircling influence, was built by Ibsen and Björnson about the middle of the last century. From Norway the torch was passed on to Strindberg in Sweden, and by him it seems to have been restored once more to Denmark, where, during the last decade, a group of young playwrights have been producing works that are rapidly spreading their fame throughout the Western world.

Hjalmar Bergström is among the foremost members of this group, and one whose reputation has grown more quickly than that of anyone else. His first dramatic work was completed little more than ten years ago, and already two of his plays have been translated into half a dozen languages and performed in a still greater number of countries. They are the plays contained in this volume, both of which have had the honor of being forbidden by hostile censors: "Karen Borne-

man" in Denmark on account of its alleged "immorality," and "Lynggaard & Co." in Russia on account of its supposedly dangerous social tendencies. And as usual when work thus singled out for official condemnation possesses genuine merit, the action meant to harm the author has proved helpful in the end.

That, in view of Russian conditions, the censorship in that country might be logically exercised against "Lynggaard & Co.," may be admitted without prejudice to the work in question. That, on the other hand, the Danish authorities had any warrant whatsoever for their attempt to brand "Karen Borneman" as immoral, cannot under any circumstances be admitted. Of course, its splendid art would constitute no defense, were its spirit not as pure as its form. But rarely has that ever vexatious question of sexual morality been set forth with more artistic restraint or with more sincere effort at seeing and presenting both sides of it.

In their eagerness to incriminate the author, the defenders of the "old" morality charged him with having made a grotesque caricature out of the figure standing as the main representative of that morality within the play — namely, *Karen's* father, the old professor of theology. Yet it is only necessary to glance at the play itself in order to see that this figure has been drawn with the tenderest sympathy, and with a fidelity to life that could hardly be imagined apart from such sympathy. What might possibly give offense to those inclined to identify themselves with that figure is not any ridicule cast upon it by the author, but the deep and true pathos naturally surrounding it. Like all who strive to dam the onward sweep of human progress, *Professor Borneman* is foredoomed to defeat and the

suffering that goes with it — and this suffering is, as usual, rendered doubly acute by the fact that he mistakes his personal defeat for a defeat of life itself and what is best in it.

Justice — implacable justice — is one of the chief characteristics of Mr. Bergström's dramatic vision. This quality makes itself felt in "Lynggaard & Co." to such an extent that those who want the drama always to present a clashing of types arbitrarily designated as "good" or "bad" cannot fail to suffer disappointment. It is a drama without a hero, and also — one might say — without an end. It belongs conspicuously to that class of works, ever on the increase, which, to quote a keen Austrian critic (Robert F. Arnold), "end with an opening of new perspectives rather than with a conclusion in the old sense." Mr. Bergström's play is next kin to those of Shaw, Galsworthy, Granville Barker, and St. John Hankin. And whether or no it be suited to our individual preferences, it should be studied as a work pointing toward the road most likely to be followed by the drama in its future development.

There is, in this disconcerting play, not one person who can be held wholly right or wrong. Nor is there one proposition involved in its plot that can be thus classed with any degree of safety. As in life, so in the play, the "truth" for which the characters wrestle is hopelessly divided between them, and obscured by innumerable considerations and interests that one moment appear selfish and in the next almost unselfish. Above all and everything stands the author, impartial as one of nature's own forces, calmly sympathetic as a mother watching the little jealousies of children among whom

she has no chosen favorite, and this is what he seems to be saying to us:

"Can you understand it? For I cannot! And so, in order that we may study this riddle to better advantage, I have put it down without fear or favor, just as I have seen it."

The creator of "Lynggaard & Co." and "Karen Borneman" was born at Copenhagen in 1868. His father was a skilled mechanic who had emigrated to the Danish capital from the Swedish province of Scania across the Sound. His mother was a native of Denmark and the daughter of an artisan. The circumstances of his parents were small, and the home poor. But the boy was an only child, and so things turned out better than might have been expected. He was a quiet, dreamy child, passionately fond of reading, and living much by himself. His favorite reading was found in the plays of Holberg and Oehlenschläger — already referred to — and these he read and reread, mostly by himself, but sometimes, of a Sunday afternoon, aloud to his parents. And his first attempt at authorship, dating back to his thirteenth year, took the form of some verses added to one of Oehlenschläger's tragedies. As he read them aloud together with the original, he found to his unspeakable pride that his parents "did n't discover any difference."

At school he did so well that his teachers helped him to free attendance at one of those higher schools through which the way must needs lie to the university. Thus he was saved from a watchmaker's shop, where his father had meant to apprentice him, but that materialization of his first youthful ambitions had to be paid for in humiliation instead of money. "Nobody who has

not gone through it himself," he wrote not long ago, "can know what bitter experiences lie in wait for him who is torn out of his natural surroundings and transplanted into a higher social stratum; nobody who has not had such an experience can know what a proud boy has to suffer when admitted gratis to a school where the rest of the pupils are paying for their tuition."

He graduated with honor into the university, feeling that "he owed that much to the principal in return for the free schooling bestowed on him." Entering the university at twenty, he had at once to begin earning a living by tutoring. At the same time, however, he pursued his studies eagerly, giving special attention to experimental psychology and modern philology. It was only toward the end of his course that he realized how the studies failed to provide for an entire side of his being. They brought him plenty of food for his intellect, but none whatever for his imagination; and so, after a sort of spiritual crisis, he decided to restore the disturbed balance by creative activity of his own.

In 1893 he obtained his degree of Ph.D. From that year until 1905 he taught in the Commercial High School at Copenhagen. At the same time he was assiduously busy with his pen. Between 1894 and 1900 he published three novels and a volume of short stories without attracting any marked attention. Then, in 1902, his first play, "Ida's Wedding," brought him instantaneous recognition as a man of great promise. The work in question, which has never been staged, foreshadowed "Karen Borneman." The theme was closely related to that of the later play, but it was treated much more sensationally and with less aloofness, al-

though even in that firstling of his dramatic genius Mr. Bergström knew how to deal fairly with types and opinions foreign to his own spirit.

In "Mint Street 39," completed two years later, he drew frankly and freely on his childhood experiences. One might say that the hero of the play is the old house itself, rather than this or that person. By degrees we are familiarized with the atmosphere of each floor, from basement to attic. And as a picture of life as lived by the small middle class of Denmark, "Mint Street 39" is said to have few equals.

But it was only with "Lynggaard & Co.," dating from 1905, that he found his real gift. He has called it a drama, but it might as well be called a comedy. It is typical of the ultra-modern tendency to mix tragical and comical elements on the stage just as they are mixed in life — that is, so intimately that it is almost impossible to distinguish one from the other. Of its social bearings, the author himself has this to say: "As far as I have been able to keep it so, the play is without any tendency, for what interests me as artist is not the solution of social problems, but the characters themselves and their respective attitudes toward the issue involved."

The struggle between capital and labor constitutes only one of several conflicts that furnish motive power for the events in "Lynggaard & Co." Another one is the struggle between individuals of different types for the control of the power inherent in vast capitalistic organizations. A third one is contained in the almost unbridgable differences between those members of the propertied classes who take satisfaction in the privileges springing from their exceptional position and

those who have begun to feel their position as a " sin." A few words here and there indicate the extent to which the author's sympathies lie with the class from which he has risen, and yet he is never tempted into any foolish idealization of the workman as he now exists.

" Karen Borneman " was planned at Florence, sketched in Paris, and finished at Barbizon in 1907. Mr. Bergström was still in France when the news reached him that the performance of his play had been interdicted by the Censor, backed by the Minister of Justice. The latter official was none but the notorious Alberti, who was later tried and found guilty on the charge of embezzling millions of money placed in trust with him. Hurrying home, Mr. Bergström found the capital in a state of wild turmoil, all on account of his play. The newspapers were full of it, most of them taking side against the government. Protest meetings were held for and against. The matter was even brought up in the Rigsdag, where Alberti met the interpellation with a vicious attack on the play. On the side of the author stood all the best men in the country, and among them such champions of modern thought as George Brandes and Professor Harald Höffding. Yet the government had its way for the time being, and it was not until a new administration had come into office that the ban was taken off the play. But in Russia, where " Lynggaard & Co." had aroused so many fears, " Karen Borneman " was played without a protest.

Since then Mr. Bergström has written four more plays: " The Golden Fleece," his only drama with a historical theme, dealing with the life of the great Danish sculptor Thorwaldsen; " The Birthday Party,"

a charming and clever one-act piece throwing sharp light on the love-life among the women who "have been left behind"; "In the Swim," a full-length play which, to quote the author himself, might have derived its dramatic idea from *Hamlet's* words: "To be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand"; and finally, "The Way to God," a drama meant for reading only, into which its author has poured a lot of material — ideas and dreams and speculations — that could find no place within the narrower and more conventional limits prescribed by the stage.

The hero of "In the Swim" is a sincere, clean, honest politician with a leaning toward the ideas of Henry George, which have long been popular in Denmark. He is set against a background of graft and corruption such as now and then becomes epidemic in every country. Every one around him is working for selfish interests and thinks him like the rest. When he cannot be reached directly, a trap is set for him, and he is compromised by the assistance of his selfish, pleasure-loving wife, thus bringing him to the tragic end in store for one who dares to remain honest among ten thousand dishonest fellowmen.

There are two central figures in "The Way to God" — a couple of friends starting into life with high ideals. Caught in the snares set by their own dreams, they "sell their souls to the Evil One." One of them is a poetical nature that wants to revel in beauty, and to him the tempter comes with the suggestion that nothing is more sensuously exciting than to sell at two dollars what has been bought for one. The other friend is a hater of tyrants, and he is caught by a promise of power. Money and power they get, but it leads only

to more money and power. They become reduced to machines used by their own faculties without regard to ends lying beyond themselves. In the end the money-maker turns into a life-despising ascetic and believes that he has found a "way to God" through his discovery that "the nature of God is the humor that surpasses all reason." His final remark is: "Blessed are those who know that there is nothing in anything." His friend, the man of power, is also saved — for when he dies, the Evil One, bent on having his price, finds "that the man had never had a soul."

"The Way to God" has caused some critics to accuse its author of "intellectual nihilism." As I have not yet had a chance to read the work, I cannot tell what basis it may furnish for such an accusation, but I am inclined to think it a slim one. Mr. Bergström is a true child of the new day which thinks that there must be at least two sides to every "truth." And I believe that his striving at impartial rendering of life as it is, must be held the very antithesis of a cynical acceptance of whatever happens as "equally good." Perhaps nothing can serve better to indicate his true position than this passage (quoted with his permission) from a recent letter:

"Having never worked in accordance with any programme, I have not been led into preparing any formulas as to what poetry is or should be. In regard to this question I can only say what personal experience has taught me. Now and then men are born, for whom imaginative writing constitutes the only possible mode of reaction to the impressions, pleasant or unpleasant, which they receive from the outside world. And at times it is also granted such men to set free

something within their fellow men — and this is their true reward. To me one of the main characteristics of all good art lies in its striving to make truth seem probable; and on its success at doing so its beauty is founded."

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF PLAYS BY HJALMAR BERGSTRÖM

Ida's Wedding (Idas Bryllup), 1902;
Mint Street 39 (Möntergade 39), 1904;
Lynggaard & Co., 1905;
Karen Borneman, 1907;
The Golden Fleece (Det gyldne Skind), 1908;
The Birthday Party (Dame-Te), 1910;
In the Swim (Med i Dansen), 1910;
The Way to God (Vejen til Gud), 1912.

KAREN BORNEMAN

A DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS

1907

PERSONS

KRISTEN BORNEMAN . . . . A professor of theology
CECILIA . . . . . His wife
KAREN, *a newspaper writer*
PETER, *a law student* . . . . Their children
THORA
DR. SCHOU . . . . . The family physician
STRANDGAARD . . . . . A sculptor
HANSINE MOLLER
A "LIVING-OUT" MAID
A WOMAN TYPIST

The action takes place in the home of Professor Borneman and lasts from early morning until late in the afternoon of the same day. The time is the present.

KAREN BORNEMAN

THE FIRST ACT

A dining-room. At the back, double doors leading to a hallway. A buffet is placed across the rear corner at the left. The corresponding corner at the right is cut off and contains a narrow window opening on a court. In front of this window, a serving table. Double doors at the left lead to the living-room. Beyond them, a linen closet. A stove of majolica tiles occupies the centre of the right wall. Near the stove, toward the front, a couple of comfortable easy-chairs. In the centre of the room, a dining-table, on which stands a purring tea urn and the necessary tea things. Above the table, a gasolier with only one jet lighted. Dining-room chairs. The furniture gives an impression of old-fashioned cosiness.

It is a dark morning in October.

The "Living-Out" Maid, a poorly looking girl of fourteen, is seated at the dinner-table, with her elbows on the table and her thumbs buried in her ears. She is deeply absorbed in the reading of a morning newspaper.

Hansine Möller, a woman in her forties, enters through the door at the back, carrying a trayful of cups, plates, and such things.

HANSINE

Well, if I ever! There 's that girl reading the paper instead of 'tending to her work. If I may ask: why do you think you are here?

MAID (*scornfully throwing away the paper*)

Yes, that 's something to make a fuss about, ain't it? Naw — the evening papers for mine!

HANSINE (*putting down the tray*)

I don't want any more of that tone, if *we* two are to work together.

MAID

Work together! You must have been born a long while ago, Hansine — before slavery was abolished.

HANSINE

Perhaps; but for all that one may have a little more experience than a whipper-snapper like you. Now, if you please, fold up the paper nicely and set out the cups.

MAID (*falling to with a good will*)

Experience — fudge! I suppose you don't know I 'm engaged, Hansine?

HANSINE

Engaged!

MAID

I bet that 's more than you have ever been.

HANSINE

And who 's the — fortunate one — if I may take the liberty to ask.

MAID

What does it matter to you? — He 's mate on board a ship.

HANSINE

So you 're having some foolishness with a cabin-boy, are you?

MAID

He 's *going* to be a mate, I tell you.

HANSINE

And why don't you stay here nights anyhow, instead of drifting in at eight or nine in the morning, just as it happens to suit you?

MAID

Stay here nights? No, thanks! I don't like being assaulted.

HANSINE

What 's that?

MAID

Lord, have n't you heard about it, Hansine? That 's why Sophie had to quit and you had to come back here.

HANSINE

What kind of nonsense is that?

MAID

Lord! The other night, when Sophie was sleeping as hard as she could, home comes the young gentleman, and gets into her room, and wants to assault her — or something worse. Sophie, she yelled and jumped out of bed with nothing but her nightie on. Then came the professor, and the missus — great scandal! The next day Sophie had to leave, and that 's how we came to think of you, Hansine. You had been here before, and, of course, we had to have a real old one. Sophie told me all this herself.

HANSINE (*looking thoughtful*)

So little Peter has turned out that way, has he? Hm — tell me — how long did Sophie's connection with the place last?

MAID

What?

HANSINE

How long did she work here, I mean?

MAID

How could I know? She was here when I came, and that 's more 'n a month ago.

HANSINE (*mysteriously*)

You never heard her speak of Miss Gertrude, did you?

MAID

Who 's that?

HANSINE

One of the daughters.

MAID

Is there another daughter?

HANSINE (*nodding confidentially*)

She 's sick, and they 've put her into an institution as incurable.

MAID (*deeply interested*)

Lord, Hansine, go on and tell! Gee, but that 's exciting!

HANSINE

Sh! Here 's the missus!

[*The Maid bustles out scornfully through the doors at the rear.*

MRS. BORNEMAN (*a pleasant, quiet lady in the middle fifties; enters from the left*) Good morning, Hansine.

HANSINE

Good morning, ma'am.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Well, how does it feel to be back here again?

HANSINE

Thank you, ma'am — it 's like getting home again. Of course, a hotel job is interesting enough — it 's

always exciting about the tips — but a home is a home after all. (*Picks up a letter from the mail that has been placed beside the Professor's plate on the dining-table*) And here 's a letter for you, ma'am.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Thank you, not now. You have forgotten that in our house the mail is never opened until after morning prayers.

HANSINE

That 's right, and there 's tea with the morning prayers. At the hotel it was always a full service of coffee, with honey on the side. (*Goes toward the background, but turns around at the door*) And that reminds me, ma'am — don't you think we 'd better put the bedroom curtains to wash? They look as if they needed it.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Yes, I think we had better. And then you 'll see that everything is ready tomorrow morning, won't you? With plenty of hot water?

HANSINE

Yes, ma'am. (*Goes out through the door at the back*)

PROFESSOR BORNEMAN (*enters from the right; he is past sixty-five, white-haired and beardless; his pale eyes convey an impression of meditative unconsciousness of the surrounding reality*) Good morning, my dear, good morning!

MRS. BORNEMAN (*busy with the tea things*)

Good morning, dear! Have you slept well?

PROFESSOR

No, I can't say that I have. Every time I woke up, I began to think of poor Gertrude.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Oh, I hope to heaven we 'll hear good news today, — but I dare hardly believe it.

PROFESSOR (*with a sigh*)

No, I fear there is not much hope in that direction — the Lord help us! At what time do you expect Dr. Schou?

MRS. BORNEMAN

Some time during the day — that 's all I know. He did n't think he could get back until last night, with the late train.

PROFESSOR

It was really kind of him to do this for us.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Yes, I was very glad when he offered to go down there. A physician can undoubtedly get much more definite information out of the superintendent than any one of us.

PROFESSOR

Well, taking it all in all, it is very agreeable to have a man like Dr. Schou for family physician.

MRS. BORNEMAN

And yet you did n't like him very well at first, if I remember right?

PROFESSOR

It was principally his public activities I did n't quite like.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Are you thinking of his agitation for a crematorium?

PROFESSOR

That, too. I don't mind having anybody look at a purely secular problem from a secular viewpoint, but

that time he was mixed up with something — and with persons — that gave the whole business an appearance of intentional hostility toward the Christian religion. Personally he impresses me as being very agreeable and very capable — but not exactly cheerful —

MRS. BORNEMAN

Well, it is n't very pleasant to be a widower at his age.

PROFESSOR

No, of course not. (*Looking at his watch*) The children are up, I hope? I have a lecture at ten.

MRS. BORNEMAN

They 'll be here in a minute. (*After a brief pause*) Really, I 'm very glad to hear you speak so approvingly of Dr. Schou.

PROFESSOR

Is that so? Why?

MRS. BORNEMAN (*with a somewhat embarrassed smile*)

Oh — of course, I don't know if I am absolutely right — but it should n't surprise me if his thoughts had begun to run toward Karen.

PROFESSOR

Toward Karen?

MRS. BORNEMAN

Why, that 's how it looks to me. For instance, I think he made rather too much out of her bronchitis last Spring. He called here almost every day all that time. And now this offer of his to go down there and find out about Gertrude —

PROFESSOR

Could it be possible?

MRS. BORNEMAN

And I have been watching Karen lately. I am sure he has made an impression on her.

PROFESSOR

Well, well — I declare! I may as well tell you frankly that, for many reasons, I should feel myself relieved of a serious and burdensome responsibility if Karen were properly provided for.

MRS. BORNEMAN

But first of all we should feel happy on her account.

PROFESSOR

Of course, that 's the way we should be looking at it, dear, that 's the way! But I should n't be honest if I did n't confess that, just in regard to Karen, I shall feel a great *personal* relief to know her once for all out of what she is now mixed up with.

MRS. BORNEMAN

I don't think there is any reason to find fault with Karen. She is a good, hard-working girl — no matter what you may have to say against some of the things in which she is interested.

PROFESSOR

At bottom, yes, I am perfectly willing to believe she is as good as she can be. But when I think of the other children — poor Gertrude excepted, of course — but all the rest have brought us nothing but happiness!

MRS. BORNEMAN (*with a smile*)

And Peter?

PROFESSOR

I don't want to give another thought to that stupid affair of Peter's. He is so young, and Sophie was

a dangerous girl to have in the house. But Selma — with full license as a public school teacher; and little Elsa — a trained nurse: those are tasks that suit a woman beautifully. But Karen, on whom we bestowed a college course at that —

MRS. BORNEMAN

She has the best head in the lot.

PROFESSOR

Undoubtedly — but to think that she should become a writer for the newspapers, with all it implies — I don't like it, Cecilia, I don't like it.

MRS. BORNEMAN

You must bear in mind that times have changed since we were young.

PROFESSOR

A young girl of respectable and well-known family who spends most of her nights in a newspaper office — and what sort of a newspaper besides?

MRS. BORNEMAN

She says that all the best writers are on the staff of that paper. It is an honor to write for it, she says.

PROFESSOR

A malicious sheet, that 's what it is! Let that be as it may, however — but her *translations* —

MRS. BORNEMAN

I have seen them highly praised.

PROFESSOR

That is not the point, Cecilia — what kind of books is it she translates? A lot of disgusting filth, the very existence of which should be unknown to a decent young girl!

MRS. BORNEMAN

It 's the work of men who rank among the greatest in the world's literature, she says.

PROFESSOR

Yes, that 's what her publisher is shouting all the time. And each time something new appears, he 's tactless enough to get the papers to print that the translator is the daughter of Kristen Borneman, the well known professor of theology, so that I seem to be lending the support of *my* name and of *my* authority to Mr. Maupassant and Mr. Zola and a lot of other guttersnipes with whose very names I am unfamiliar. Well, pardon my violence, but the whole thing is really most disagreeable to me.

MRS. BORNEMAN

I cannot see how any reasonable person, with the least sense of justice, can hold you responsible for what a grown-up daughter of yours happens to be translating at the request of a bookdealer.

PROFESSOR

Not directly, perhaps, but indirectly, my dear — indirectly it has proved rather disagreeable to me. During my lectures at the university — you know there are mischief-makers even among our theological students — I have twice had the disagreeable experience of seeing the most indecent of the books translated by my daughter passing from desk to desk — with the name of Karen Borneman printed on the cover. And it was perfectly clear that they hoped I should notice it and become confused by it. You cannot imagine how disagreeable it was to me, and, of course, I could n't do anything about it. It gave me the same sense of my daughter's public prostitution

as I had the day I visited the art exhibition — well, I did n't even want to tell you about that.

MRS. BORNEMAN

What was it?

PROFESSOR

Oh, in reality it was n't anything at all, of course. But among the sculpture there was a statue of natural size, showing a nude young woman — a rather shameless piece of work, which made me wonder how the jury could have admitted it — well, anyhow you can imagine my disagreeable surprise when I discovered that the head bore an accidental, but quite remarkable resemblance to that of Karen. The face was exactly hers.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*astonished*)

At the present exhibition — a piece of sculpture — that 's very strange.

PROFESSOR

Well, things of that kind will happen. It 's something against which one cannot guard oneself. But I assure you that I experienced exactly the same disgusting sensation as I did during those lectures. This indecent statue became to me a sort of visible expression of the manner in which respectable people must be regarding Karen — as publicly disgraced.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*after a brief pause*)

Well, Kristen, I don't know if any such regards for our own ease of mind entitle us parents to put obstacles in the way of what our children want to do. It does n't seem so to me.

PROFESSOR

It 's such a difficult matter to decide — I have to admit it — when the children are compelled to sup-

port themselves. But *some* consideration ought to be shown us nevertheless. It 's as I said — if only Karen were married to some decent fellow —

MRS. BORNEMAN (*checking him*)
Hm!

KAREN (*enters from the left; twenty-eight years old; of refined, cultured appearance; happy and refreshed after a good night's sleep*) Good morning!

PROFESSOR
Good morning.

MRS. BORNEMAN
Good morning, Karen. [*Pause.*

KAREN (*suddenly serious*)
You seem to be so silent — it is n't — did Dr. Schou call last night?

MRS. BORNEMAN
No, I don't expect him until today.

KAREN
Oh, I thought perhaps — (*Goes to the dining-table and begins to look over the mail*)

MRS. BORNEMAN (*admonishingly*)
Karen, don't you know that it displeases your father *before* —

KAREN (*puts down a letter*)
It can't be a sacrilege to look at the outside of the letters.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*disapprovingly*)
Karen!

KAREN (*with a glance at her father*)
Cheer up, papa! I am not as bad as I pretend to be. (*Going up to him*) When you were young, did you never feel overwhelmingly happy in the morning?

PROFESSOR

Every morning of my life I have felt a deep happiness and gratitude because a new day was granted me — and so I have done whether times were good or bad.

KAREN

So you don't think the Lord can be satisfied with our just being happy at life in a general sort of way? (*With a sudden change of tone*) But you look so tired, papa — are you not well?

PROFESSOR

I did n't get much sleep last night.

[*Peter and Thora enter noisily from the left. Thora, who is ahead, shuts the door in Peter's face and tries to keep him from coming in. All at once she lets go her hold, so that he plunges head foremost into the room. Peter is twenty, and Thora sixteen.*

MRS. BORNEMAN

Children, children! Don't you know that your father does n't want that kind of thing *before* — ?

[*All seat themselves in silence around the table. The Professor sits at the rear end. Mrs. Borneman and Peter sit at the left side. Karen and Thora at the right.*

PROFESSOR

Now, children, we 'll be quiet and let each one say his own prayers.

[*He covers his face with his hands and remains in silent worship. Mrs. Borneman folds her hands and bends her head. Karen is looking straight ahead. After a moment of general silence, Peter makes a face at Thora, who, in spite of her folded hands, barely manages to keep serious. When the prayer is over, Mrs. Borneman serves tea.*

PROFESSOR (*who has been glancing over a letter, holding it very close to his face*) Well, well! I declare!

THORA

That 's good news, papa — I can see it.

MRS. BORNEMAN

What is it, dear — you look quite excited?

PROFESSOR

Why, it 's from my publisher. Think of it — the first edition of " Marriage and Christian Morality " is sold out, and they 're going to print a new one. That means eight hundred crowns, my dear.

MRS. BORNEMAN

What do you say to that, children?

THORA

I say: a new coat for me!

PETER

And I say: long live marriage and Christian mor — (*stops abruptly*)

THORA (*tittering*)

Sophie —

[*Peter gives her a secret kick under the table.*

PROFESSOR (*who has read through the letter again*)

Well, I must say that this book of mine has been unusually blessed.

KAREN

What 's in your letter, mother? You look so pleased through and through. It must be from Henrik.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*still deep in the letter*)

Yes, it 's from your brother Henrik — he 's writing from the parsonage — and he has a son that weighs nine pounds.

PROFESSOR (*pleased*)

No, is that so?

PETER
He 's thrifty.

MRS. BORNEMAN
And finally he asks if we could n't let him have a thousand crowns — he 's willing to pay interest on them, he says. [*Oppressive pause.*

PETER
Hm!

THORA
There goes my coat!

PROFESSOR
One thousand crowns?

MRS. BORNEMAN
Yes.

PROFESSOR
I have to go in and get my spectacles and see for myself what he writes. (*Rises and takes the letter*)

KAREN
Don't you want me to get them for you, father?

PROFESSOR
No, thank you, dear, you won't be able to find them. (*He goes out to the right*)

THORA (*after her father is well out of the room*)
Nine pounds — is that so very much?

PETER
It 's a good deal too much of the kind.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*shaking her head*)
Peter!

KAREN
That 's the fifth one — in six years.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*with a little sigh*)
Well, I really cannot see how he expects to get along with such a flock of children and such a small parish.

PETER

Why he lives contrary to all statistics.

MRS. BORNEMAN

What do you mean?

PETER (*with self-importance*)

We learn from statistics that the number of children born is directly proportionate to the economical status.

[*Thora bursts into joyful tittering.*

MRS. BORNEMAN

I hope you don't get too learned, Peter dear. — And here 's a letter for you, Thora.

THORA (*eagerly*)

A letter for me?

PETER (*snatching the letter out of his mother's hand*)

Hm — hm! It 's a man's writing — that 's perfectly plain!

THORA (*in a rapture*)

It must be from Katherine then — she writes just like a man.

PETER (*handing the letter*)

Hm — and there is a photograph in it.

THORA

Give me the letter!

PETER

Let 's have a look at Katherine — perhaps she *looks* like a man also?

THORA

You just dare, Peter! Have you forgotten Soph —

[*As Professor Borneman returns at that moment, all merriment subsides, and Peter gives up the letter, which Thora makes haste to hide away in her dress.*

PROFESSOR

It 's doubly fortunate that this new edition of " Marriage and Christian Morality " was called for just now.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Yes, if you look at it that way. — Don't you want a little more tea, dear?

PROFESSOR

No, thank you, dear.

[*The whole family gets up from the table.*

PROFESSOR

It seems to me as if you had also had a letter, Karen?

KAREN (*who is standing a little apart, with a letter in her hand, and sunk in deep thoughts*) Yes.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*trying to catch the eye of her husband*) Perhaps it 's a secret, dear —

KAREN

No, it 's also from a publisher.

PROFESSOR (*disappointed*)

Oh!

PETER (*directing his words chiefly to the grateful ear of Thora*) Perhaps they want a new edition of " Jeanne's Bridal Night "?

MRS. BORNEMAN

Something good, is n't it, Karen?

KAREN

My publisher wants me to translate the writings of Anatole France. Of course, it 's an important task that cannot fail to bring distinction — but —

MRS. BORNEMAN

But what?

KAREN

For business reasons he wants me to leave for Paris at once, and to stay there until the work is done.

PROFESSOR

For business reasons — what does that mean?

KAREN

Well — it 's to be a subscription work, and when it 's announced he intends to put notices in the papers saying that the translator has gone to live at Paris in order to be in a position to consult the author himself. He offers to send me 300 crowns a month regularly.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Do you mean to go?

[*Karen makes a gesture as if she did n't know what to reply.*

THORA (*with an ecstatic glance upwards*)

Paris!

PETER

Three hundred a month — some people *are* lucky!

PROFESSOR

Tell me, Karen, what kind of an author is this — (*he has forgotten the name*)

KAREN

Anatole France —

PROFESSOR

Yes.

KAREN

Why, it 's rather hard to tell in a few words, but he is already regarded as a classic.

PETER

He is one of those moral fellows. I read one of his books — and it seemed to make a new man of me.

THORA

Oh, but I envy you, Karen. — Paris! — "For everything at Paris is terribly grand — "

MRS. BORNEMAN (*looking hard at Karen*)

It does n't strike me that the thought of it is making you very happy, Karen. Last time you were going to Paris, you acted quite differently about it.

KAREN

Oh, I don't know. This sudden proposition has taken me somewhat by surprise. But now I 'll have to see about it —

[*The Professor and Mrs. Borneman look knowingly at each other.*

PROFESSOR (*after consulting his watch*)

Well, good-by, children.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Wait a moment, dear, and I 'll go with you. I wanted to get some errands done so I can be back before Dr. Schou arrives.

[*The Professor leaves through the door at the back. Mrs. Borneman and Thora go out to the left. The Maid enters. While she is clearing off the table, Peter keeps staring at her with all his might. Her only response is to look as sulky as possible. Karen sits buried in her own thoughts for a while.*

PETER (*completely lost in observation of the Maid's every movement*) What a generation that 's coming after us! If one were only in a position to marry *at once!* But I suppose *you* are already engaged, my dear young lady —

[*The Maid begins to titter, but controls herself quickly and looks once more highly indignant.*

PETER

That 's what I thought. Over-subscribed. But perhaps there is still hope of getting on the waiting list. — My dear lady, can't I help you?

[*He opens the rear door for her with great solemnity.*

KAREN

Don't mind him, Laura, and you don't need to come back. I 'll put away the cloth myself.

[*She puts away the tea urn and brushes the crumbs off the tablecloth. Peter begins to whistle.*

KAREN

Give me a hand! (*They fold up the tablecloth together, Peter whistling and making various fancy steps*) Well, you *are* in high spirits, Peter.

PETER

I — in high spirits — not a bit. It 's all on the surface. Oh, no, my existence is far too lamentable.

KAREN

In what way? You lack nothing.

PETER

There is n't much fun in it for me, is there?

KAREN

Why don't you bring some friends home with you now and then? That would also get you out a little more.

PETER

Fine place to bring friends to! Do you know what they call this establishment of ours?

KAREN

No.

PETER

" The House of the Holy Ghost." Some of them were here for dinner — *and* grace!

KAREN

Well, it did n't hurt them.

PETER

It makes me cross to think you 're going to leave, Karen.

KAREN

Oh, does it — why?

PETER

You 're like an open window in this house. Ugh, when I think ahead of what our life is going to be now — and our Sunday evenings. Can you imagine anything worse? There 's brother Adolph, looking sour as he can be. Thirty-two years old, a B.A. and a private tutor, 2,500 crowns a year, has to be up at 8 o'clock Monday morning to drill kids. There 's Selma, already an old maid and a public school teacher, has to be up at 8 o'clock next morning. There 's Elsa, stinking of carbolic acid, and having to be up next morning at 8 o'clock.

KAREN (*continues jestingly*)

And there 's Karen, with ink on her fingers — and not exactly a spring chicken either.

PETER

But you don't give the *impression* of an old maid.

KAREN

That 's a fine one!

PETER

I should like to know how many hundred Sunday evenings we 'll have to sit here like that. Do you call that life? I feel almost like running away.

KAREN

To where?

PETER

China, Japan, South Africa — any old place. Do you know what I have figured out?

KAREN

What?

PETER

I am twenty years old, a law student, normally gifted, reasonably industrious — and it will take twenty years more before I can hope to support myself, wife and children. That 's statistically proved!

KAREN

It 's well then that you have n't got wife or children.

PETER

That 's anything but well for a fellow of my age. Now is just the time I should have a wife. If I once get to forty, then it does n't matter any longer. (*Impetuously*) No, now, now, now!

KAREN (*with a kindly smile*)

You must be in love, Peter.

PETER (*dreamily*)

Do you know Ellen Hall?

KAREN (*shaking her head*)

How old is she?

PETER (*with a triumphant ring in his voice*)

Eighteen! (*In subdued ecstasy*) Oh, Karen — every night before I fall asleep, and every morning before I wake up — (*with a sigh*) and then it 's all so utterly hopeless.

KAREN

Yes, she would be thirty-eight by that time.

PETER

U-uh! The world mechanism must be at fault somewhere. I have to look it up in the statistics.

KAREN

Yes, find the fault, Peter! (*She turns out the gas jet that is still burning*)

PETER

Well, I 'm off to the coach. (*He stops at the window and looks at the rain which is coming down hard*) What a weather — what a country — ugh!

KAREN

Do you want me to give you a piece of good advice, sonny?

PETER

Good advice?

KAREN

You would like to earn some money at once, leave home, and enjoy life a little?

PETER

Oh, what a dream you are unfolding!

KAREN

Go into newspaper work!

PETER (*stricken all but dumb*)

Newsp —

KAREN

Newspaper work.

PETER

Karen, I feel as if I had discovered a new continent! What a fool I have been — and I who write with such ease. But the Old Man — he 'll erupt sacred ire.

KAREN

There is already one of the kind in our family.

PETER

I 'll let the coach go hang today, Karen. I 'm off for a good long walk outside the city — I 'm just ready to burst. The Old Man *must* give in. Why, it 's

almost in the Bible: better do newspaper work than burn! (*He goes out quickly to the left*)

HANSINE (*enters from the rear, announcing*)
Dr. Schou!

KAREN
Let him come in.
[*Hansine goes out.*

DR. SCHOU (*enters from the rear; about forty years old; of distinguished appearance*) Good morning.

KAREN
Good morning, Dr. Schou.

DR. SCHOU
I hear that neither the Professor nor your mother is at home, but I did n't think I could leave without having seen you.

KAREN
That 's very kind of you. Won't you sit down? I fear the sitting-room is n't ready yet.
[*They sit down at the right near the foreground.*

DR. SCHOU
You know I went to see the superintendent about your sister yesterday?

KAREN
I can hear from your voice that there is no hope of improvement.

DR. SCHOU
You are right, I am sorry to say. Physically the patient is doing very well, but in other respects —

KAREN (*painfully moved*)
Did you see her?

DR. SCHOU
I could n't make myself do so.

KAREN

And yet I thought you were accustomed to that sort of thing?

DR. SCHOU

Your mother has told me she looks very much like you — and I could n't bear it.

KAREN

I want to thank you sincerely for doing us this favor. All of us feel very grateful.

DR. SCHOU

It was only what might be expected of me.

KAREN

I have wished so much that there might be some spark of hope at least. Principally for my father's sake.

DR. SCHOU

Do you think he feels it more than the rest of you?

KAREN

I am not sure, but it seems to me as if he had begun to look so old lately, and so tired. Of course, you have only known him a few years now. But you should have seen him as he used to be — strong and masterful — a really magnificent man.

DR. SCHOU

Your father is n't seventy yet?

KAREN

Sixty-five — which is n't so very much. Are your parents still living?

DR. SCHOU

Both of them died years ago.

KAREN

Then it must be hard for you to understand how it feels — what a pang of regret it sometimes gives you — to see your father passing away day by day. It

fills you with such a desire to be good to him, to cuddle him, to let your eyes rest in his all the time — for tomorrow it may be too late, perhaps —

DR. SCHOU

Oh, that 's something I can well understand.

KAREN

Now, when I have to go away, I dread to press his hand in farewell. I know, when the moment comes, that I shall feel it is for the last time.

DR. SCHOU (*becoming attentive*)

Are you going away?

KAREN

I shall probably go to Paris.

DR. SCHOU

To Paris?

KAREN

Yes.

DR. SCHOU

For a visit only — or to stay?

KAREN

For a couple of years at least.

DR. SCHOU

Then it is not a pleasure trip?

KAREN

No. You know that I live " by my pen," as they call it. My publisher wants me to go to Paris in order to translate Anatole France's work right on the spot.

DR. SCHOU

Is that so? When do you mean to go?

KAREN

Perhaps tomorrow.

DR. SCHOU

Have you closed the contract?

KAREN

No. I have just received the offer.

DR. SCHOU

And you are — pleased at the prospect?

KAREN

Well, why not? I have nothing that actually ties me here.

DR. SCHOU (*disappointed*)

No, I suppose not —

KAREN

Of course, there are *a few* persons whom I value and whom I shall miss —

DR. SCHOU

I don't know if I dare count myself among them?

KAREN (*smiling*)

You know very well! [*Pause.*

DR. SCHOU

It will seem very lonely when you are gone, Miss Borneman.

[*Karen smiles deprecatingly.*

DR. SCHOU

I mean it seriously. As the years go by, the people you really care to meet grow fewer and fewer. And now, when the Winter is at the door, and the long, lonely evenings —

KAREN

I shall send you many friendly thoughts.

[*Piano music is heard from the sitting-room, and both listen for a while in silence.*

KAREN (*with a smile*)

That must be Thora who is having a sentimental attack.

DR. SCHOU (*recognizing the melody*)

"To me you 're like a blossom, so fair and sweet and pure." I have always found those words so pretty. And then the end: "And I pray that the Lord may keep you — so fair and sweet and pure." Don't you feel the same way about them?

KAREN (*with a half-suppressed sigh*)

Yes — it sounds rather pretty. And a little old-fashioned. But, of course, they were like that —

DR. SCHOU

Oh, I think it must always be the same — "so fair and sweet and pure." (*Rising*) Well, unfortunately, I must go on. But I 'll take the liberty to call again later for a talk with your mother.

KAREN (*rising*)

You 're always welcome, Dr. Schou.

DR. SCHOU (*smiling*)

I suppose the contract won't be signed today — it 's the thirteenth.

KAREN (*with a responsive smile*)

I 'm glad you reminded me. Then it will have to wait till tomorrow.

DR. SCHOU (*nodding gaily*)

Good-by — for a little while!

[*They shake hands. Karen sees him out. On her return she looks thoughtful. Then a happy smile flits over her face.*

THORA (*peeping in through the door at the left*)

Are you alone? (*Rushes up to Karen and embraces her; then she begins to whirl around like a dancing dervish*)

KAREN

What 's the matter, Thora? Have you gone crazy?

THORA (*keeping up her dance*)
Oh, if you only knew!

KAREN
How foolish you are, Thora.

THORA
But you could n't understand, of course. It 's like a fairy tale — always the youngest first. (*Stops dancing*) Are you not at all curious?

KAREN
It is n't very hard to guess.

THORA (*dancing*)
Oh, you 're always so patronizing. But then I won't tell you anything either.

KAREN
So the letter was from one of your beaux?

THORA (*contemptuously*)
Pooh, beaux — those kids! (*Makes another dive at Karen and embraces her with heedless violence*) Oh — life is wonderful! (*Drawing back from Karen again*) But you 're a tedious lot — all of you! (*Pulls out photograph and kisses it*)

KAREN
Well, can I have a look at him, Thora?

THORA
Not for anything! (*Ecstatically, with closed eyes*) Because I *love* him!

KAREN (*sits down at the right*)
How old is he, Thora?

THORA (*with enthusiasm*)
Eighteen! — And he writes verse, and he puts it to music. What was it now? (*She takes out a letter*) "May God forever keep you so fair and sweet and pure." (*With a sudden, comical change of tone*)

Why *pure* anyhow? (*Her eyes fall upon Karen, who is staring sadly into nothingness*) But what is it, Karen? — Why, you 're crying? (*Goes to her sister and bends down over her*)

KAREN (*with tears in her eyes, strokes Thora's cheek gently*) Nothing in particular, dear. What was it he wrote? "May God forever keep you — "

THORA (*slowly*)

"So fair and sweet — "

KAREN (*with a significant nod*)

"and pure!"

[*As the curtain falls, she sits staring sadly into space.*

CURTAIN

THE SECOND ACT

The sitting-room. At the back, double doors leading to a hallway. When they are open, the outside door to the stairway can be seen. Against the rear wall, on either side of the doorway, a small, old-fashioned cabinet of mahogany. Halfway down at the left double doors lead to the dining-room. Nearer the background, on the same side, there is a single door. A stove of white glazed tiles occupies the middle of the right wall. On the same side, near the background, stands a chiffonier of mahogany, while, at the end toward the audience, a single door leads to Professor Borneman's study. In the centre of the room there is a large round table, with comfortable chairs grouped around it. Near the foreground, at the left, a small table, sofa, and a couple of chairs. The walls are decorated with a few old-fashioned oil-paintings, some family portraits, etc.

A couple of hours have passed since the close of the previous act.

Mrs. Borneman is seated on the sofa at the left, occupied with some needlework. Peter is sitting on a chair right opposite her. He seems to be in very bad humor.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*with a sly smile*)

And so the audience came to an end.

PETER

Yes, that typewriter lady arrived. And now she is rattling out the words of wisdom that issue from father's exalted lips. That 's something to suit him!

Now he can talk for hours without being interrupted, and tomorrow it will all be noted down by the students — also without the least protest. Pish!

MRS. BORNEMAN

Well, Peter, I could have foretold the result in advance. You 're no diplomatist.

PETER

That kind of treatment makes me sore: one, two, three, march — and done with! You don't even get a chance to say what you want. One might think he was talking to a freshman.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Now, Peter, what 's the reason you want to give up the law all at once and begin to write for the papers?

PETER (*hard pressed for an answer*)

Well, I don't know — it 's like this — one might call it, perhaps — need of self-expression. Yes, need of self-expression is the word.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*smiling as before*)

So you feel an irresistible need to express yourself in public?

PETER

Well — yes. And then I should also like to earn some money, and become a little more independent, and live like other young fellows.

MRS. BORNEMAN

In other words — move away from home.

PETER

Now, *you* — one can talk to you. You 'll understand, I 'm sure, that it 's no particular fun to live in a room meant for the servants, with Hansine next door, and with hardly any furniture but the big closet where you keep the linen, and a lot of lumber. But

it 's perfectly plain to me that I 'll never get away from home until I make some radical change. (*He gets up and begins to walk back and forth*)

MRS. BORNEMAN

Now, my boy, how would it be if we two agreed on a more sensible arrangement for the future?

PETER (*stopping still*)

In what way?

MRS. BORNEMAN

You stick to the law —

PETER

Thanks, I know all about that. (*Walks back and forth again*)

MRS. BORNEMAN

But —

[*Peter interrupts his walking again.*

MRS. BORNEMAN

If you can earn some money on the side, do so. And I 'll see that you get away from here — to one of the college dormitories, if to no better place.

PETER

You 'll never put that through.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Beginning next month, I shall have your room fixed up for the maid, so that she can stay here all the time — there 's plenty to do for her also.

PETER (*enthusiastically*)

Oh, mother!

MRS. BORNEMAN

But don't talk any more to your father about it.

PETER

I believe I 'll have to take a good long walk and think

it over. (*He leaves quickly through the upper door at the left*)

PROFESSOR (*opens the door at the right in order to see if his wife is in the room; then he enters*) Oh, Cecilia, I hope you 'll write to Henrik this very day and wish him luck on account of the newcomer — from all of us.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Yes, I meant to do so.

PROFESSOR

And I suppose we had better promise him that thousand crowns. But, of course, it 's out of the question that he should pay any interest.

MRS. BORNEMAN

I have thought a great deal about that thousand crowns, Kristen. I am not quite sure that we have the right to —

PROFESSOR

But now, when eight hundred has come dropping from the sky, so to speak?

MRS. BORNEMAN

When you think of it, Kristen — there 's Adolph wearing himself out by teaching both morning and night. He and his wife deny themselves everything in order to put aside a little money, so that he may be able to publish his doctor's thesis. What would n't eight hundred crowns mean to them? And, after all, he 's also our son.

PROFESSOR

True enough, my dear, but I cannot help thinking it more important to bring a child into the world than to get out a book. If Adolph came to me and said:

we expect to have a child, father — can you lend me some money? Then he would get it.

MRS. BORNEMAN

I don't see how Adolph, with his income as tutor, could afford to bring up any children?

PROFESSOR

Has Henrik more to live on?

MRS. BORNEMAN

Yes, he *has* more, to begin with; and he has hopes of getting still more by and by; and finally, it 's only by mulcting all the rest of us that he can make both ends meet. The children he gets are paid for by the entire family.

PROFESSOR

What do you mean by that?

MRS. BORNEMAN

Oh, you know perfectly well. We are not the only ones who have had to send him hundreds and hundreds of crowns. During these years, Karen and Elsa and Selma have had to deny themselves many a simple pleasure in order to send what they could spare to the parsonage. But most of all I pity Adolph, who perhaps has to forego children because he feels that he cannot afford them.

PROFESSOR

But we have no right to think like that, Cecilia. A marriage without children — it means the shirking of a duty.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Oh, I don't know. If he escapes a certain amount of trouble that way, he has also to miss a proportionate amount of happiness. And one thing balances the other, it seems to me.

PROFESSOR

Really, Cecilia, it impresses me most painfully to hear you utter such opinions. I had even thought of speaking earnestly to Adolph about this matter as soon as I had a chance — and it would hurt me, it would hurt me very much, if you encouraged him in such a deplorable error.

MRS. BORNEMAN

I have never said a word to him about it, so you need not worry on that score. What I cannot see is simply how it can be held any special merit to put children into the world without the least regard for the outcome.

PROFESSOR

We *must n't* think like that, Cecilia. It 's to doubt the Divine Providence. And in our little country nobody has died from hunger as yet.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Not all at once, but I think there 's more than one who has died of it by degrees.

PROFESSOR

That is n't a Christian way of looking at it, Cecilia. It has been forbidden us to take thought of the morrow. These childless marriages — they are among the saddest signs of the time.

MRS. BORNEMAN

But what are people to do when they *can't afford* it?

PROFESSOR (*seriously disturbed*)

Dearest Cecilia, here I am sending out edition after edition of the main opus of my lifetime, "Marriage and Christian Morality," and I imagine myself to have accomplished something by it, and then I have

to listen to such opinions from those that are nearest and dearest to me.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*with a sigh, as she drops her needlework into her lap*) It seems to me awfully hard to find a way out of this.

PROFESSOR

Hard to find a way — and why? Because in our self-righteousness we are going our own ways instead of following the plain commandment of the Lord. Believe me, there is only one kind of marriage that brings a blessing with it — the one that is instituted to put children into the world. With this in view, marriage is sacred and pleasing to the Lord.

MRS. BORNEMAN

So it is not enough for two people to live together in mutual love?

PROFESSOR (*warming up as he talks*)

No, Cecilia — that has nothing whatever to do with marriage. What is so inconceivably glorious about marriage is just that, through it, God has delegated His own creative power to us sinful human beings — that He has almost made us share His own divine omnipotence. Now try really hard to think of this, my dear — how marvellous it is. In the morning of the ages, the first human couple was created by the Lord Himself, but of all the gifts He bestowed on them, there was none more splendid than the ability, through all coming time, as long as the world would last, to bring ever new generations into sharing the joys of life on this earth, and the hope of a still more blessed existence beyond! For this reason the only moral marriage is the one instituted to bring children into the world. Thereby man and woman

are at once given a purpose lying *outside* of themselves. And believe me, whenever the time is out of joint, you have to seek the roots of the evil right here. Poets and philosophers in plenty are always found ready to bedizen men's errors and obfuscate their views. It works for a time, but not very long, for man *must* have a purpose outside of himself, and two human beings, who are to live life together, must have a *common* purpose of that kind. The Lord has meant life to be like that — and it 's something we cannot get away from.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*who has been listening thoughtfully*)
Perhaps you are right, Kristen — looking at it from that side.

PROFESSOR
Yes, you may be sure that I am right — I am eternally right!

TYPIST (*after knocking at the study door, she opens it ajar*) I don't know, professor, if you —

PROFESSOR
Now I 'm coming. (*Rising*) You 'll write to Henrik then.

MRS. BORNEMAN
Yes.

[*The Professor goes out to the right. His wife drops into a deep reverie.*

HANSINE (*enters from the rear, announcing*)
Dr. Schou.

[*Mrs. Borneman indicates by a nod that she will receive him.*

DR. SCHOU (*entering from the rear*)
Good morning, Mrs. Borneman.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*who has risen and gone to meet him*)
Good morning, my dear doctor.

DR. SCHOU
I don't know if Miss Karen has already —

MRS. BORNEMAN
She has told me what you said. Of course, it was what we feared. Don't you want to sit down, doctor? (*Both seat themselves at the table in the centre*) The superintendent, Dr. Sachs, has practically weaned me of the habit of hoping.

DR. SCHOU
I am sorry that my own impression was the same yesterday. Once it has reached a state of apathy —

MRS. BORNEMAN (*trying to master her grief*)
Well, it won't help to worry any more than we have already done.

DR. SCHOU
Physically there is no trouble whatever.

MRS. BORNEMAN
Which makes it still worse, I had almost said —
[*Pause.*

DR. SCHOU
Of course, Dr. Sachs and I talked the matter over pretty thoroughly —

MRS. BORNEMAN
Did he say anything that might be of interest to us?

DR. SCHOU
He told me about the sad and unusual circumstances under which the original crisis occurred.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*somewhat startled*)
Oh — he told you about that?

DR. SCHOU

I can assure you, it made a very deep impression on me.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Yes, it 's a wonder that one gets over such things at all! And then, to think that perhaps it might have been avoided — that seems to me almost the worst part of the whole thing.

DR. SCHOU

In regard to that we cannot know anything with certainty.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*with emphasis*)

On that point I have my *own* opinion, Dr. Schou, and there are *some* authorities who share it —

[*Dr. Schou shrugs his shoulders.*

MRS. BORNEMAN

Well, now I want to thank you very much for your kindness. Of course, the very certainty brings a certain relief with it, sad as it may be. — But now, seeing that you have learned of the regretful events leading up to it, there is a request I should like to make of you.

DR. SCHOU

Perhaps your other children don't know anything about it?

MRS. BORNEMAN

Not only they, but, as chance would have it, my husband was not at home when this affliction befell us — *and I have never told him just how it happened.*

DR. SCHOU

I shall not say a word —

MRS. BORNEMAN

That part of our sorrow I have kept to myself.

DR. SCHOU

I cannot but admire the force of character this must have required.

MRS. BORNEMAN

It has n't been easy, I can tell you. (*Pause*) But now I thank you very, very much.

DR. SCHOU (*rising*)

Pardon me, madam, but do you think it would be possible for me to get a brief talk with the professor — preferably in private?

MRS. BORNEMAN

Yes, my husband is at home. And I 'll let him know at once. (*She goes out to the right*)

PROFESSOR (*enters from the right*)

Good morning, doctor.

DR. SCHOU

Good morning, professor.

PROFESSOR

I hope you will pardon me for not asking you into my study — I have a young girl at work copying some manuscripts. Won't you be seated, please? (*They sit down at the table in the centre*) And I want to thank you heartily for all the trouble you took yesterday.

DR. SCHOU

I have only to regret that I could n't bring you some better news.

PROFESSOR (*largely to himself*)

Oh, if one could only cry out of a candid heart: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!" (*After a brief pause*) Well, was there anything in particular that you wanted to speak to me about?

DR. SCHOU

Yes, it is with a particular purpose in mind that I have asked to see you. — As you know, perhaps, I lost my wife some years ago — a loss that touched me very painfully. At first I believed that I should never become myself again, and in order to bear up under my sorrow I plunged into a lot of public affairs, in which until then I had only had a theoretical interest. In that manner I got through the worst, but of any real happiness in this life I had no hope. It was about that time I had the fortune of becoming your family physician — and I mean what I say in calling it a fortune, for from the first day I saw your daughter, Miss Karen, it was as if my old longing for life and happiness had returned — and so it has been ever since. Without as yet having spoken any final and decisive word to your daughter, I believe myself nevertheless so sure of the outcome, that now I dare to appeal for your approval of an eventual marriage.

PROFESSOR (*pleased*)

Well, that 's —

DR. SCHOU

If it should appear strange to you that I choose this somewhat old-fashioned way —

PROFESSOR

Not at all, doctor. On the contrary, it pleases me very much. In my own day I did the same thing —

DR. SCHOU

— one of my reasons is this, that if you have had in mind a son-in-law with a certain life view — Christian, let us say — then I must at once say for myself —

PROFESSOR

I don't feel that I have any right to meddle with your views on life, or on things transcendental, and the less so because I fear that, unluckily, my daughter at heart does not share the faith of whose blessings I have done my best to make her a participant.

DR. SCHOU

I was very anxious that we should come to a clear understanding on this point from the start.

PROFESSOR

It is enough to me that, in you, I have found a righteous, earnest and honest man, who has already once lived in happy union with a wife.

DR. SCHOU

So I have, but without daring to claim any merit for myself on that account — she never caused me a single sorrow but that of dying so young.

PROFESSOR

Well, my dear doctor, so far as I am concerned there will be no difficulty, and I don't care to hide the fact that I feel heartily grateful to you for your wish to marry Karen. The position she has chosen in life is at once uncertain and conducive to so much that — at any rate I don't like very much. An assured future on her part will be a great consolation to me in my old age.

DR. SCHOU

I am very thankful to you for your consent. (*Rises*)

PROFESSOR (*also rising*)

There is one thing, however, that I must say right here. I have no fortune, and you know the modest size of a professor's income —

DR. SCHOU

That question need not figure in the present case, professor — I possess a completely equipped home.

PROFESSOR

So much the better. But there is also something I want you to promise me — that the future offspring of your and Karen's marriage will be baptized and, at least during their school-age, brought up in the Christian faith.

DR. SCHOU

This I promise you.

PROFESSOR

Thank you. Well, then I do hope and wish that the step you are now taking may prove a genuine blessing both to yourself and to my dear daughter. As far as my wife is concerned — knowing, as I do, what a good impression you have made on her — I can safely assure you of her hearty consent. (*Takes Dr. Schou's right hand between both of his own*) You have brought joy to my old age — may the Lord be with you!

DR. SCHOU

Thank you!

PROFESSOR

There I hear Karen coming — I shall not be in the way. (*Goes out to the right*)

KAREN (*enters from the rear*)

Good morning again, Dr. Schou. Are you sitting here all alone? Have n't you seen anybody?

DR. SCHOU

I have talked with both your mother and your father — but I should also like very much to have a talk with you.

KAREN

That 's nice of you. (*She sits down at the table in the centre*)

DR. SCHOU

And concerning a serious matter at that.

KAREN (*mockingly*)

You quite scare me.

DR. SCHOU (*with embarrassment*)

I don't know exactly how I 'm going to get it said. But when, about a year ago, I entered this house for the first time as physician, I was feeling like a man who has already received his due share of life's happiness, and who can expect no more of it.

KAREN (*with nervous vivacity*)

Yes, you looked as grave as a grave that time.

DR. SCHOU (*earnestly*)

Yes, that was just what I did — for all my joy had just been buried.

KAREN

Forgive my thoughtless expression — I did n't mean to hurt you. I know very well how much you lost in your wife —

DR. SCHOU

You have n't hurt me at all. But if, in spite of everything, I have recovered courage and joy of life and, I might as well say, youth — it is you I have to thank for it.

[*Karen smiles deprecatingly.*

DR. SCHOU (*eagerly*)

I mean it in all seriousness. From the very first time I saw you and up to this moment — it has for me been nothing but a continued return to life.

And I was not uttering empty words when I told you this morning, as you were talking of going away, that I should feel lonely as never before if you were not here so that I could see you, at least now and then, and that I should think with horror of a Winter without you — not to speak of whole years. For this reason I regard it a lucky coincidence that I happened to meet you just after you had received this offer from your publisher: who knows otherwise how long time may have passed before I had managed to tell you what 's in my heart? And now, my dear Miss Karen, I suppose you can guess the rest — all I want to say is how happy you would make me by becoming my wife.

KAREN

Well, my dear Dr. Schou — I may as well confess at once that, of course, I have noticed, and let it be seen that I noticed, how you of late have developed an increasingly good opinion of me and my person. I expected also that some time it would have to come to an explanation between us. And from your first visit this morning until a short while ago, I have even been seeking various lonely spots to consider the possibility that some day you might propose to me. (*Growing serious*) For everything is not as simple and easy as you probably suppose —

DR. SCHOU

I understand perfectly that you may hesitate in reaching a decision, even if, personally, perhaps, I am not antipathetic —

KAREN (*with a sigh*)

Oh, my dear doctor, it is n't that.

DR. SCHOU

The life I have to offer you will, of course, be nothing but a quiet routine, even if — looked at from my own viewpoint — it may appear quite rich and full because of my love for you. And, of course, I don't know whether this will seem sufficient to you. The life you are now leading and have been accustomed to for years must have its *own* attractions, free and untrammelled as I suppose it is — especially in comparison with merely peaceful domestic happiness.

KAREN

Oh, no — I believe every woman who has reached a certain age — and you know I am twenty-eight — will, without hesitation, prefer a limited but secure existence by the side of an honest man to the most unlimited personal freedom.

DR. SCHOU

You said you had been thinking the matter over today — did you arrive at any conclusion?

KAREN

I *did* arrive at a conclusion. [*Pause.*

DR. SCHOU

I can read nothing in your face.

KAREN

I don't know exactly how to express myself. But this much is clear, that perhaps it would be wiser — or at least easier for myself — to say no to your honest offer of marriage — and this in spite of the fact that I have come to like you a great deal and very well can imagine myself living happily with you. But when after all — and after careful consideration — I *don't* say no, it is because of my confidence that you are the liberal-minded and advanced

man I have taken you for — a confidence in which I have been strengthened by your public utterances.

DR. SCHOU (*with some uncertainty*)

I hope I shall not disappoint your confidence in this respect, although personally I don't think that opinions of a certain form, or identical opinions, are required in order to enable two people who love each other to live happily together. — But, anyhow, I believe myself to have a fairly open-minded view of life's relations — if that is what you mean.

KAREN

Yes, it is exactly what I mean, and it is because of my confidence of it that I now make this confession to you. (*Speaking with effort*) Some years ago I — lived with a man.

DR. SCHOU (*rising in consternation*)

Lived with —

KAREN

Lived with a man. Yes, now you know it. [*Pause.*

DR. SCHOU (*walking back and forth, deeply stirred*)

I hope you pardon me, but your — confession has overwhelmed me.

KAREN (*tentatively*)

You are a widower yourself. You may regard me as a widow or — a divorced wife.

DR. SCHOU

Have you — or have you had — a child?

KAREN

No.

DR. SCHOU (*painfully impressed*)

Oh, I see — [*Pause.*

KAREN (*humbly*)

I have watched the splendid work you have done for

the saving of fallen women in our country. You might regard me as one of your — fallen women.

DR. SCHOU

The best of them *began* by putting a child into the world. [*Pause.*

KAREN (*coldly*)

All right, then. I was mistaken after all. I believed you to be more liberal in your views.

DR. SCHOU

More liberal in my views? Even the most liberal view must have a limit — and mine does not go beyond the point where squalor begins.

KAREN

Squalor?

DR. SCHOU

Yes.

KAREN

I don't understand.

DR. SCHOU

There is something at just that point, a clear line of demarcation —

KAREN (*after a brief silence*)

It would, indeed, have been a great deal easier for me to say no. And *better*, I perceive.

DR. SCHOU (*with a deep sigh*)

It would also have been easier for me if you had done so. (*He sits down, staring right ahead; pause*)

KAREN (*leaning toward him and trying to smile*)

Do you really think it so very dreadful that I have loved before?

DR. SCHOU

Loved — no! (*Rising*) But that kind of thing — not for a moment would I be able to forget —

KAREN (*indignantly, as she also gets up*)

Doctor, how dare you! A phase of my life that at least to *me* is sacred, and you cast reflections on it, that —

DR. SCHOU (*calmly*)

You are quite right. Of course, it is something that no longer concerns me. (*With grief*) But you have to forgive a man who sees his whole world come to an end — (*Pause*) There is something I must tell you — something I deeply regret at this moment — that a while ago, just before you came in, I asked your father's approval.

KAREN (*with agitation*)

You have talked to my father?

DR. SCHOU

Yes, unfortunately.

KAREN

That you could have spared me.

DR. SCHOU

It was stupid of me, but, of course, I could n't know. — But now I 'll be forced, in some way or another, to tell him —

KAREN (*preoccupied*)

Yes, I suppose so.

DR. SCHOU

But I 'll do it discreetly.

[*He goes quietly out through the rear. Karen remains sitting in the same place, stirred to the very depths of her soul.*

CURTAIN

THE THIRD ACT

The sitting-room. A few hours have passed. The door to the hallway stands open. Hansine is seen opening the outside door for Strandgaard.

HANSINE

Oh, is that you again?

STRANDGAARD (*a man in the early thirties; his appearance is that of an artist who has made his way from the bottom — without sign of social or intellectual refinement; but his eyes are radiant with the culture that springs from the practice of an art requiring manual dexterity; his glance is observant and thoughtful; for the moment he conveys the impression of being somewhat excited*) Yes, it 's me. And you have n't dared to tell that I have been here before?

HANSINE

Oh, mercy, no!

STRANDGAARD

Is she at home now?

HANSINE (*after a look at the overclothes hanging in the hallway*) Her coat is there — so I guess she must be in her room.

STRANDGAARD

Good. Will you please bring her out then.

HANSINE

Wait a minute, my dear. What name am I to give her?

STRANDGAARD

Here 's my card — if you please.

HANSINE (*reading*)

Strandgaard — sculp —

STRANDGAARD

" Sculpteur " — that means sculptor.

HANSINE

Is that so? All right, I 'll tell her.

STRANDGAARD (*holding her back*)

And if she should take it into her mind that she does n't want to see me, will you please tell her that in such a case I 'll simply make myself at home right here until she appears — *even if I have to stay here the whole day!*

HANSINE (*a little frightened by him*)

Yes, yes, now I 'll tell her.

[*She goes through the door at the left rear. In the meantime Strandgaard walks nervously up and down. Karen enters through the door by which Hansine left.*

STRANDGAARD

How are you, Karen?

[*Karen stands unbending and silent.*

STRANDGAARD

Thank you for wanting to see me.

KAREN

Wanting to?

STRANDGAARD

Yes.

KAREN

I guess I was forced to it, unless I wanted to expose myself to worse things.

STRANDGAARD (*with emotion*)

I *had* to see you once more. (*Looks around with some embarrassment*) Have n't you a room of your own?

KAREN

Yes, of course.

STRANDGAARD

Can't we go in there?

KAREN

No, we cannot.

STRANDGAARD (*with a sweeping gesture of his arm*)

This general assembly hall —

KAREN (*nervously*)

Now please do me the favor of leaving at once. You ought to understand how unpleasant —

STRANDGAARD

You have avoided me on the street; you have not answered my letters — there was nothing else left for me.

KAREN

Well, be seated then, and let us have it over.

[*They sit down at the left, near the foreground, Karen on the sofa, Strandgaard on a chair opposite her.*

STRANDGAARD

How pale and sick you look, Karen.

KAREN

Oh, it 's only a little headache.

STRANDGAARD

And you are not happy either, Karen — I can see it by your looks.

KAREN

What do you want of me? Tell it quick. You understand, I hope, that I am on pins and needles.

STRANDGAARD

Heavens, what harm can there be in the visit of an old friend from Paris? (*Lowering his voice*) If you knew what I have passed through since we met the last time, you would look a little more kindly at me.

KAREN

I am perfectly willing to look at you with kindness, but it does n't mean anything.

STRANDGAARD

I have had such a hard time of it, Karen.

KAREN

Yes, but now *that 's* over.

STRANDGAARD

So you know?

KAREN

I keep *Le Journal*, and I have read both of the gold medal and the sale. Of course, I know what that means.

STRANDGAARD (*without boastfulness*)

Well, now I cannot help becoming a rich man. But it has been dearly paid for, Karen. I don't think I 'll ever get over the years that have passed.

KAREN

It is n't my fault, is it?

STRANDGAARD

It seems to me you have had revenge enough.

KAREN

Don't let us begin all over again.

STRANDGAARD

From the day you left me at the *Gare du Nord* and up to a couple of months ago — those in hell could n't be worse off. How could you do it, and do it in that manner —

KAREN

The scene you made at the station that day was very painful. It was something I think you could have spared me.

STRANDGAARD

I know very well that I was beside myself, and if the police had n't taken care of me, I should probably have made for the river. And then to wait three years — three whole years — for the miserable sum needed to bring me up here so that I could see you — just see you! Such wretched poverty! I can hardly understand how I lived through it. And then never to get an answer to my letters. Of course, I know that when I try to write — it sort of gets away from me — I have n't your education —

KAREN

I never opened them.

STRANDGAARD (*touched to the quick*)

Karen!

KAREN

For it *had to be done with. Irrevocably done with.*

STRANDGAARD

Three years have passed since then, Karen — we ought to be able to look calmly at it now.

KAREN

So I did from the first.

STRANDGAARD

No, you could n't at that time. And I — I was n't

even allowed to say a word in my defence. And then, when you left all of a sudden — it was like a sword cut! But now you *must* hear me.

KAREN

And if you had a hundred excuses to offer — dispose of it you cannot. Our relation was based on one thing only — on a trust beyond all betrayal! And you — you not only deceived me, but you did so in a mean and unworthy way. Were we not living together like people properly married? Did n't I stand by you in your struggle? Did n't I give myself to you as a wife to her husband? And all the time you kept up that other — faugh!

STRANDGAARD

Now, Karen, for once I want the chance to say my say! Now I have been turning it and twisting it for three years, so that I know it by heart. When I deceived you, as you call it — and now I swear by all that is precious and holy — I was not deceiving you! Not for a single minute did I cheat you out of anything belonging to you. You see, Karen, of us two, it was you who had culture and refinement and learning. What did I have? What was *I*? An ignorant, uneducated fellow; a mere workman out of a public school. And for that reason I looked up to you as a higher being, and I did so more and more every day — yes, every hour that went by I saw more and more clearly the chasm separating us. I loved you as a swineherd would love a princess — a real swineherd, and not a prince in disguise! But do you know, Karen, all there was in me of the swineherd demanded its own rights as well — it was like a boil ready to burst. But my relation to you I wanted to keep clean

and beautiful. And I *could n't do* it in any other way — not that time.

KAREN

That is just what I call deceiving me. You deceived me in regard to one side of your own nature. And I who wanted you only as you were —

STRANDGAARD

You don't know what you are saying — what an abyss —

KAREN

The relation between us two had to be chemically purified, so to speak —

STRANDGAARD

I wanted so badly that we two should be able to look at each other with unflinching eyes.

KAREN

And all there was in you of sensual abandon — that had to be passed on to *another.*

STRANDGAARD

Out of respect for you.

KAREN

But you forgot one thing.

STRANDGAARD

What?

KAREN

That we women also want to be *that other one!*

STRANDGAARD (*stares speechlessly at her for a moment; then he leans close to her and says in subdued but passionate tone*) You love me still! I can see it — you are consumed with desire, just as I am!

KAREN (*drawing back from him*)

No, and a thousand times no!

STRANDGAARD

You lie to yourself!

KAREN

Don't you understand that the man who lets a woman feel that she is not enough for him — and not enough as woman, at that — he offends her to the very bottom of her soul.

STRANDGAARD

I never said anything of the kind!

KAREN (*almost hoarsely*)

Just there lies that sin against love which is never forgiven — never! [*Pause.*

STRANDGAARD

Karen — it seemed to me as if fortune had held out her hand to me at last. And so she has, and if I cling to it and don't let go — not for a moment dare I tire and let go — she will pull me up, right up to the top. Yet I know this much with stupefying certainty — if you cast me aside now, then I cannot — then I shall give up and roll down again. All that we were dreaming of in the old days, when, from the heights of Montmartre, we watched the setting of the sun — all that we can have now: a fine house and children, company and travels — all that we can have — I have orders ahead for several years — fortune has held out her hand to me. But I want to get still higher up; I want to be of some importance out there; I want to have influence. You seem to be born for that kind of thing, Karen — you, with your refinement and self-assurance. By your side I shall find every *salon* open to me. We 'll get married, both in church and civilly. The papers are ready! And you 'll see that even your father will treat me like an equal when I intro-

duce myself to him in new black company coat, with the ribbon of the Legion of Honor on the lapel!

[*For a moment Karen smiles indulgently at him.*

STRANDGAARD

My lord, Karen, are you not already a part of all this? The statue to which I owe it all — the one that has brought me gold and name and future — it 's the one for which you posed in those years of hardship. Only now could I finish it — after three years full of love that wished for nothing. That much was needed to raise it above the dirt and corruption of earthly things, up to the point where it now stands. — Did n't you feel anything of all this when you saw it again?

KAREN (*uncomprehendingly*)

When I saw it again?

STRANDGAARD

Have n't you even seen it yet?

KAREN

Where?

STRANDGAARD

Here, at the exhibition — *Grand Prix du Salon?*

KAREN (*appalled*)

And that you have dared!

STRANDGAARD

What do you mean?

KAREN

What I mean? To exhibit me publicly, so that everybody can see who it is — here, in this city!

STRANDGAARD

Why, did n't *you* care as much as I did, that time, to get it into the *Salon.*

KAREN

That time — yes, but *now*, after what has happened since then!

STRANDGAARD

I cannot see that it makes any difference.

KAREN (*angrily*)

So, you cannot? Then, of course, you cannot understand either, that I feel myself outraged in my innermost soul, that I feel myself publicly prostituted by your tactlessness. Such a minimum of delicacy I had expected of you at least — in spite of everything!

STRANDGAARD (*piqued*)

Oho! So I am not *fine* enough for you — that 's what it is! *You* have otherwise no reason to play prude or act the fine lady: *you* —

KAREN (*turning pale*)

What do you mean?

STRANDGAARD

After what you had permitted yourself before a simple fellow like myself had the honor —

KAREN

Mr. Strandgaard!

STRANDGAARD

I am not malicious, Karen, but by the living God — if anybody offends me, and I have a weapon at hand —

[*Karen has in the meantime rung for the servant. Hansine enters from the left.*

KAREN

Will you show this gentleman out!

[*Flushed with excitement Karen goes out to the left. Hansine has already opened the door to the hallway. Strandgaard grabs his hat, hisses out something, and*

hurries out. Hansine leaves the door of the sitting-room open, so that she can be seen opening the outer door for Strandgaard. She does n't close it after him, but remains listening, as if she could hear somebody coming up the stairs and wanted to see who it was. Shortly afterwards Professor Borneman appears.

HANSINE

I heard you coming, Professor.

PROFESSOR (*while Hansine helps him to take off his overcoat*) What kind of man was that you just let out, Hansine?

HANSINE

That was Mr. Strandgaard, a sculptor. He has been calling on Miss Karen.

PROFESSOR (*becoming attentive*)

A sculptor named Strandgaard?

HANSINE

Yes — such a peculiar fellow.

PROFESSOR

Hm — won't you please tell my wife that I should like to speak to her.

HANSINE

Yes, sir. And then a messenger called with a letter for you. It 's on your desk, sir.

PROFESSOR

Thank you.

[*Hansine goes out to the left, the Professor to the right. A moment later Mrs. Borneman enters from the left, and at the same time the Professor returns with an open letter and a printed pamphlet in his hand.*

MRS. BORNEMAN

What is it, Kristen — you look so upset?

PROFESSOR (*with a quiver in his voice*)

Here 's a letter from Dr. Schou.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Something unpleasant?

PROFESSOR

This is how it reads: "My dear Professor Borneman: — I regret deeply that my talk with your daughter today revealed an unexpected, but insuperable hindrance. Under such circumstances I am sure you will understand and approve my desire not to continue as your family physician."

MRS. BORNEMAN

I don't understand at all, Kristen.

PROFESSOR

An unexpected, but insuperable hindrance —

MRS. BORNEMAN

I don't understand how I could have been so mistaken.

PROFESSOR

There is something behind this, Cecilia. There is surely something behind this.

MRS. BORNEMAN

How do you mean?

PROFESSOR

Did you see anything of that man Strandgaard who just called on Karen?

MRS. BORNEMAN (*turns pale, but manages to control herself*) I have neither seen nor heard anybody — I was taking a little nap in my chair when Hansine called me. Has anybody been here to see Karen?

PROFESSOR

A sculptor named Strandgaard. I met him on the stairs just now. Hansine told me who he was.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Yes, but what could that have to do with Schou's remarkable letter?

PROFESSOR

Perhaps more than we imagine.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Do you mean that Karen might be secretly engaged to —? But then I can't understand her behavior toward Dr. Schou.

PROFESSOR

Secretly engaged, you say. May I ask this: is a young girl likely to pose as a model, naked, for one to whom she is secretly engaged?

MRS. BORNEMAN

What are you talking of, Kristen?

PROFESSOR

Will you look at this — the catalogue of the exhibition. Can't you see? "Strandgaard, sculptor, Paris — at present, Hotel Savoy, Copenhagen."

MRS. BORNEMAN

Well, what of it?

PROFESSOR

Do you remember I told you this morning of a disgusting statue I had seen at the exhibition?

MRS. BORNEMAN

The one that resembled Karen?

PROFESSOR

It is by this same man Strandgaard who, only a quarter of an hour ago, called on Karen here in our own house.

MRS. BORNEMAN

But what in the world *is* this, Kristen? Why, it 's a thing — something we cannot even speak to Karen of.

PROFESSOR (*ringing for the servant*)

Yes, speak to Karen is just what we have to do. We must get some light into all this. I can have no peace until it is explained.

MRS. BORNEMAN

And what are you going to say?

[*Hansine enters from the left.*

PROFESSOR

I should like to talk to Miss Karen. Will you please ask her to come here at once. (*Hansine leaves*) We must have full explanation, Cecilia. Uncertainty is ten times worse. Can't you see that there must be something behind this? All of it cannot be pure coincidence, can it?

MRS. BORNEMAN

But above all, Kristen — be careful about it.

KAREN (*enters and looks expectantly at her parents; when neither of them makes a beginning, she says*)

Hansine said that you wanted to speak to me.

[*The Professor hands her Dr. Schou's letter.*

KAREN (*reads it with evident emotion*)

Yes, that is correct.

PROFESSOR

And you have no — further remark to add?

[*Karen looks uncomprehendingly at her father.*

MRS. BORNEMAN

We cannot understand it, Karen dear — considering the way you have always talked of Dr. Schou, and behaved toward him. It has made us very unhappy, and we don't understand.

PROFESSOR (*as Karen remains silent*)
Are you tied to anybody else?

KAREN
No.

MRS. BORNEMAN
Then we don't understand at all. And are you not going to help us, Karen?

KAREN
Why, there proved to be a hindrance. If this hindrance lay in him or in me — I cannot decide it myself for the moment. (*In a tired voice*) But you must n't ask me any more.

PROFESSOR
Is there nothing you want to confide to me, Karen? We might go into my room. You look as if there were something that weighed on your conscience.
[*Karen shakes her head.*

PROFESSOR
Or would you rather confide it to your mother?

KAREN
No. You must n't ask me any more.

PROFESSOR
Remember, Karen, that to make confession, freely and openly — that 's the road.

KAREN
This is a matter you have no right to ask me about.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*glancing apprehensively at her husband*) If you yourself, Karen, don't feel any craving to relieve your heart — then we won't press you to do so either. We thought only there might be something we could help you to get through.

KAREN

But you must understand that there are matters which one has to settle within oneself.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*with an imploring glance at her husband*) Yes, yes, of course. Just as you say, Karen.

PROFESSOR (*with trembling voice*)

But then there is something else, Karen — something we have an absolute right to have explained — something which it is your daughterly duty —

MRS. BORNEMAN (*trying to intercede*)

No, dear, not now!

PROFESSOR (*very much agitated*)

Yes, now is just the time.

MRS. BORNEMAN

I can see that Karen is not well.

PROFESSOR

That does n't matter at all. — Karen, answer me honestly and truthfully: have you posed as model for that man Strandgaard?

[*Karen stands silent with tightly closed lips.*

PROFESSOR

Do you know, or don't you, that at this moment you are publicly exhibited — naked, and the likeness perfect, so that anybody can walk in from the street and have a look at you?

MRS. BORNEMAN

You ought to know, Karen, whether you have had anything to do with it or not.

KAREN

I knew nothing whatever about it until today.

PROFESSOR

That 's no answer. It 's merely an evasion. But then you know this man Strandgaard, and you were talk-

ing with him in here only a few minutes ago — that 's something you don't deny, do you?

KAREN

I knew him at Paris.

PROFESSOR

All right! (*Goes out into the hallway and begins to put on his overclothes*)

MRS. BORNEMAN (*runs after him, very much alarmed*)

What is it you mean to do?

PROFESSOR (*while getting into his overcoat*)

What I mean to do? I want to get hold of that scamp and demand an explanation of his impudence.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Let us discuss the matter sensibly first.

PROFESSOR

This calls for immediate action. I am going to demand that the statue be taken away this very day and that he be publicly called to account for it.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Do come in and let us —

PROFESSOR

It 's no use —

KAREN (*with desperate resolution*)

Well, for God's sake, let me then go and see him myself.

PROFESSOR (*testily*)

Suppose we keep His name out of this dirty business.

KAREN

Father! (*trying to hold him back*)

PROFESSOR

Let go! Where did I put that catalogue with his address in it? (*Returns to the sitting-room to look for it*)

MRS. BORNEMAN (*also trying to hold him back*)
Kristen, I am so afraid that the excitement of talking with him will be too much for you. Why, you are already shaking with emotion.

KAREN
I 'm sure — I who know him — that nothing will come out of it but intolerable humiliation for you, and that would hurt me so much, father.

PROFESSOR
Well, if you were to follow me shrieking through the streets, you could n't keep me from seeing this matter to an end. It 's my *will* to carry on this warfare to the bitter end, even if it has to come to a public scandal.

KAREN (*with emphasis*)
The scandal might prove worse than you imagine, father.

PROFESSOR
I don't see how it can become worse than it is. (*Discovers the catalogue*) Oh, there it is! (*Goes out into the hallway again*)

MRS. BORNEMAN
But, Kristen, don't you see that Karen is fainting: Come and help!

KAREN (*who has sunk down on a chair, her face blanched*) There was a relationship between me and that man at Paris — now you know it.
[*Painful pause.*

MRS. BORNEMAN (*patting Karen's head mechanically in her despair*) My poor child!

PROFESSOR (*forcing himself to be calm*)
So he has seduced you. Then we must hope that the scoundrel has enough sense of honor left to marry

you. (*He picks up his hat and umbrella, which he had previously laid down on the table*)

KAREN (*with a final summoning of her strength*)

It was I who broke the relation between us. I have just turned him away for the last time.

PROFESSOR

So much the better if you are making the difficulties. Then there is still hope. (*He goes out through the rear door in a state of violent excitement*)

CURTAIN

THE FOURTH ACT

Professor Borneman's study at the hour of dusk.

In the left wall, two windows. A desk stands against the rear wall at the extreme left. To the right of the desk there is a single door leading to the sitting-room. The rest of that wall is covered with bookcases. In the right wall, near the background, there is a door leading to the hallway. A stove occupies the middle of that wall. Near the foreground stands another bookcase.

A big work-table, surrounded by chairs, stands in the centre of the room, so that the length of the table parallels the rear wall.

Mrs. Borneman sits motionless in front of the stove, staring at the fire.

Hansine comes in from the right with a lighted lamp which she places on the table. She pulls the window curtains together.

MRS. BORNEMAN

If anybody should ask for my husband or myself, we are not at home to anybody. You understand, Hansine?

HANSINE

Oh, yes, ma'am. [*Pause.*

MRS. BORNEMAN (*speaking like one carrying out an order under hypnotic influence*) Has the wash been put to soak?

HANSINE

Yes, ma'am.

MRS. BORNEMAN

And you remembered — the linen by itself?

HANSINE

Yes, ma'am.

MRS. BORNEMAN

That 's good.

[*Hansine goes out to the right. Mrs. Borneman remains motionless as before. Then she hears somebody entering the hallway from the outside. She rises, listens a moment, and goes to open the door at the right.*

MRS. BORNEMAN

I have been sitting in here, Kristen, in order not to be disturbed.

[*Professor Borneman enters from the right. He has a look as if, somehow, he had aged and shrunk.*

MRS. BORNEMAN (*looking at him in suspense*)

Did you see anybody?

PROFESSOR (*in a toneless voice*)

Yes.

MRS. BORNEMAN

How — did he take it?

[*The Professor sinks exhausted down on a chair.*

MRS. BORNEMAN (*with emotion*)

My poor Kristen, how it has taken it out of you!

PROFESSOR (*almost sobbing*)

What can I have done — an old man like me — what can I have done! (*He gets up and walks to and fro*) Four children I have had to lay in their graves; one daughter is incurably insane — that 's what I have had to live through, and yet I tell you, all of it was as nothing compared with the blow I have just received.

MRS. BORNEMAN

But you yourself insisted on it, Kristen.

PROFESSOR (*with a deep sigh*)

Yes, I insisted on it.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Both Karen and —

PROFESSOR (*fiercely*)

Don't mention that name to me! — But, then, I could n't guess what was still in store for me. Yes, indeed, it would have been much better if I had shut myself up quietly with my sorrow and my shame. — There I was, ready to call a perfect stranger to account in the name of morality and my trampled rights as a father. Full of indignation as I was, I spoke with authority and threatened him violently, as if he were a cowardly scamp who had seduced a young girl — and with a word, only one word, that man struck me such a blow that all of a sudden I felt little and almost compelled to ask his pardon for my impertinence.

MRS. BORNEMAN

But, merciful heavens, what could he say that was worse than what we already knew?

PROFESSOR

What he could say? He looked at me as if he had n't understood, and said — (*he cannot get his lips to shape the words*)

MRS. BORNEMAN

But what did he say?

PROFESSOR

"Your daughter was not a virgin when I became acquainted with her." That was all he said.

[*The pause that follows is tense with emotion. Mrs.*

Borneman sits down, overwhelmed, but preserving her outward composure.

PROFESSOR

All the way home I have been calling the Lord to account — God forgive me my sin! But I cannot grasp it. I cannot grasp why, in my old age, I should be punished so incomprehensively hard. And at the very point concerning which I knew that I have never, never been too easy-going with my children's upbringing. In regard to this one point my conscience is clear: that much I dare say without any self-righteousness. I have searched and scrutinized the conduct of my own life from beginning to end, but I cannot find the spot. For a spot there must be — a spot on which I should be able to put my finger and say: here lies the cause! At some one spot there must exist a reason why the punishment of the Lord is hitting us so crushingly hard at this moment. For the visitations of the Lord are never meaningless.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Then the fault must lie with me, as there have been two of us to bring up the children.

PROFESSOR

With you?

MRS. BORNEMAN

Yes.

PROFESSOR

What do you mean anyhow?

MRS. BORNEMAN

What *you* would call a good conscience in regard to that point — I don't have it. But I have nevertheless acted in the belief of doing what was right.

PROFESSOR

But what have you been doing, woman?

MRS. BORNEMAN

I *knew* that Karen was living with Strandgaard in Paris.

PROFESSOR (*appalled*)

You knew —

MRS. BORNEMAN

Yes.

PROFESSOR

You cannot be aware of what you are saying — you must be ill, Cecilia.

MRS. BORNEMAN (*shaking her head*)

No, my dear, I am perfectly responsible.

PROFESSOR

Did Karen make a confession to you?

MRS. BORNEMAN

Never. Some well-meaning soul wrote me from Paris to let me know — at the time Karen was staying there, about three years ago — but I paid no attention to it.

PROFESSOR

What 's that you are saying? You paid —

MRS. BORNEMAN

I paid no attention to it. First of all, it was already too late when I learned of it — the calamity had already occurred.

PROFESSOR

And secondly —

MRS. BORNEMAN

And secondly, I did not regard that calamity quite as great as most other people would have done in my place —

PROFESSOR

Have I ceased to understand the words I hear — (*He leans against a chair as if seized with dizziness*) It is as if the ground were shaking under my feet — (*Controlling himself with effort*) And to me, your husband, you did n't even show that letter!

MRS. BORNEMAN

I have never shown that letter to anybody.

PROFESSOR

You have acted in a sinful, self-willed manner — but you will have to defend yourself before the Lord on that account. — And when Karen returned from Paris —

MRS. BORNEMAN

I have never said a word about it to Karen.

PROFESSOR (*crushed*)

Verily, the visitation of the Lord was not an accident.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Yes, I suppose that 's the way you have to look at it — from your viewpoint —

PROFESSOR

Miserable mother — on the Day of Judgment you will have much to answer for.

MRS. BORNEMAN

I am fully aware of what I have to answer for, both to God and men. [*Pause.*

PROFESSOR

May I see that letter?

MRS. BORNEMAN

When you had left a while ago, and Karen went to her own room in despair, I took that old letter from its hiding-place and sent Hansine in to Karen with

it — and with the message, *that nobody but I had ever read that letter!* In this way I believe it has filled its mission, though not as it was originally meant — [*Pause.*

PROFESSOR

What you have done shocks me deeply, but I am absolutely horror-stricken at your — your frivolous conception of a young girl's innocence and chastity. How in the world can a mother —

MRS. BORNEMAN

Perhaps just a mother, if she has the will to see and understand —

PROFESSOR

I know no longer either what I shall believe or whom I shall believe. Tell me at least that you are lying, Cecilia — tell me that you have lied yourself guilty in order to protect your child!

MRS. BORNEMAN

I have not at all lied myself guilty, Kristen.

PROFESSOR

What an abyss of horror is suddenly opening itself at my feet! My own wife, my own child! — But, miserable woman, you must at least have had some reason — there must at least have been some reason for the desperate sin you committed?

MRS. BORNEMAN

Yes — there *was* a reason. For ten whole years I have gone here and kept it hidden from you. Every day of those years I have had to struggle in order to keep it to myself and spare you. But now I can no longer do so. — The reason was Gertrude's misfortune.

PROFESSOR

Gertrude's misfortune? What in the world has that to do with this?

MRS. BORNEMAN

Be quiet for a moment, dear Kristen, and listen to me. Now I *must* for once talk to a finish. — That day, years ago, when Karl Herman came to you and asked for Gertrude's hand, then he and Gertrude *were* already engaged and had been so for a long time in secret. Well, you had learned from various "well-meaning" persons that the young man's past had not been "pure" — as it had n't, of course.

PROFESSOR

Oh, he was really a disgusting fellow, that man.

MRS. BORNEMAN

I don't quite know what to say to that, my dear Kristen — but anyhow you cross-examined him as if you had had a regular criminal before you, and the whole thing was so painful that he left in anger. And you came very near treating Gertrude in the same fashion, after you had first made her confess that she *knew* with what kind of man she had been dealing — for in that respect he had proved himself honest enough.

PROFESSOR

I should do the same thing over again today if a man came to me whom I suspected.

MRS. BORNEMAN

But you did n't see the results of what you did. As you walked out of the room that day, and I was left alone with Gertrude — it was as if something within the girl had snapped, and then everything within her

seemed to tumble down. But neither then nor later did you notice how she gradually sank into a state of sluggish melancholy, until one day the disaster occurred. And so horrible it was, that even now I can hardly make myself speak of it. — Well, it was that day, you know — we had already gone to the country, while you were still in the city. The other children had gone to a dance and were to stay away over night, but Gertrude had remained at home. Toward evening I was sitting by myself in the pavillion. Then all of a sudden Hansine came rushing in with her dreadful tale —

PROFESSOR (*looking at her uncomprehendingly*)
You are not telling me anything that I don't already know, Cecilia.

MRS. BORNEMAN
Yes, unfortunately, I am. Hansine came rushing in and yelled out something I did n't catch. A little while afterwards they brought Gertrude back. — They had found her on the highroad where she was walking about stark naked, trying to stop the men that went by. (*She begins to cry*)

PROFESSOR (*sinking together*)
Oh, my God! Oh, my God!

MRS. BORNEMAN (*wiping her eyes and controlling herself*) Now you know the connection. After that day I had my own thoughts about such things, and I began to talk them over with our old physician. And finally he admitted I was right. Anyhow, he had to grant me that the catastrophe might never have occurred if Gertrude had married.

PROFESSOR
What could he know about that?

MRS. BORNEMAN

Oh, he knew a great deal more than he would own up to — I saw it very well. — Suddenly I understood the whole thing. Gertrude and Karl Herman had been going around together for a long time, secretly engaged — kept in that dangerous state of engagement when two young people mutually excite each other without daring to go further. Then their relation was abruptly broken off. Let us grant that there may have been some morbid tendency in her — although we had never noticed anything of the kind — at this time everything in her that until then had been artificially repressed found an outlet, but through false channels. And the horrible thing of it is — the thing I can never get over — that perhaps it might have been avoided. — There lies behind all this something that is stronger than ourselves, something capable of taking revenge. — You cannot imagine what a mother has to go through with grown-up daughters who do not get married in time — that is, if she has eyes to see with. — There must be something wrong in all this — something that we human beings have not arranged properly —

PROFESSOR

I shall never admit that you are right, never — not even now, when I feel the deepest pity for you. Under all circumstances there is only one thing to do for us Christians: to obey the commandments of God, however unreasonable they may appear to us for the moment. They constitute the *only* guidance we possess.

MRS. BORNEMAN

Oh, well, then each one of us will have to keep his

views to himself. But from that day I have — after careful consideration — done what I could to let our children live the life of youth, sexually and otherwise, in as much freedom as possible. The result of your educational method, my dear Kristen, is our poor Gertrude, who is now confined in an insane asylum, as incurable. The result of my method is Karen, I suppose. I don't know if it is very sinful to say so, but I feel much less burdened by guilt than I should if conditions were reversed.

[*The Professor sits staring silently ahead.*

MRS. BORNEMAN

So now I have laid bare the only secrets I ever kept from you. Perhaps you will now come to see Karen's behavior in another light, and to judge her in a different manner than you would otherwise. Without her being aware of it, it is I who have been back of everything, I who have been too easy-going, and for this I am ready to assume the responsibility.

[*Karen enters quietly from the rear and remains for a moment standing in hesitation near the door; she looks self-controlled. Mrs. Borneman gets up and gives her a glance as if to say: "Come only!"*

KAREN (*throws her arms around her mother's neck and cries with tear-filled eyes*) Mother, mother — that letter!

[*Mrs. Borneman pats her gently; it is evident that she is deeply moved.*

KAREN

And here I have been living all these years without realizing what a mother I had!

[*Mrs. Borneman pats her as before, while at the same time her compassionate glance calls the atten-*

tion of Karen to her father, who has remained in his attitude of silent collapse.

KAREN (*moved to pity by the sight of his figure, which seems to have aged visibly in a short time*) Yes, father dear, it hurts me, hurts me very, very much, to see your despair and sorrow, and I should feel a thousand times more at ease if I were really conscious of some guilt, so that I could throw myself at your feet and ask your pardon. But that I cannot do.

PROFESSOR (*quietly disconsolate*)
My poor misguided child! Not even the conviction of sin is yours — how, then, can salvation be possible?

KAREN
Conviction of sin — no, I have n't got it. But now I want both of you to listen calmly to what I have to say. Then you can declare me guilty or innocent afterwards, when I am gone.

MRS. BORNEMAN
So you are going?

KAREN
I leave tonight.

MRS. BORNEMAN
What is it you have to say to us, Karen?

KAREN
I should like so much to leave this place in peace and understanding, if understanding be possible. Before, when there was nothing but misery in sight, I thought merely of getting away from here, and later I meant to write and try to defend myself. But when this letter came, then I could n't. Then I felt that I should never get peace without having said what I want to say.

PROFESSOR (*trying to be calm — but his voice is quivering*) Well, well, child, speak out then what 's in your heart.

MRS. BORNEMAN

We 'll listen to you calmly, Karen.

KAREN

Thank you!

[*She sits down at the big table in the centre, facing the audience. The Professor is sitting at the left of the stage, Mrs. Borneman at the right.*

KAREN

The sum and substance of it is this: I have been married twice.

PROFESSOR

Don't let us bedeck our actions with words — you mean that you have had relations with two men.

KAREN

I mean that twice during my life — with years between — I have given myself, body and soul, to the man I loved, firmly determined to remain faithful to him unto death.

PROFESSOR (*in a toneless voice*)

So he was right, that man —

MRS. BORNEMAN

Twice during your life — how could that happen to you, Karen?

KAREN (*showing emotion*)

He who was the first love of my youth died. You never knew him — unfortunately, for he was the best, the noblest man I have ever met. He was a young newspaper man and a promising novelist. To marry in ordinary fashion was entirely out of the question. His books brought him nothing. He lived

hardly long enough to see his talent and his aspirations recognized — it did n't come until after his death. As a newspaper writer he earned his living, and no more — for the sake of his future he had to do as little as possible of other things in order to find time for his real work. And I — I was almost completely dependent on *you* at that time. But it did n't seem to us that this ought to stand in the way of our love. And loving each other honestly and dearly as we did, why should n't we belong to each other? Our happiness was not lessened by the fact that we had to keep it to ourselves. — Only two years were granted us of that life in common. Then he died suddenly. Well, as I look back at that time now, I cannot understand where I found strength to live through it, cut off, as I was, from all chance of sharing my sorrow with others. Think only of having to appear here among you with an everyday smile on my face and death itself in my heart! (*Smiling through tears*) For at that time I did n't know what a mother I had!

MRS. BORNEMAN (*moved*)

My poor Karen! [*Pause.*

KAREN

Then I went to Paris — a few years later. And when I had been there a time, it seemed as if life should have begun to surge within me once more. And there I met my second husband. — To be just to myself, I must make a distinction between the way I look upon him now and the way I saw him then. Sure of himself and of his future he was to such an extent that his certainty became contagious. Patient and persistent also, like the workman's son

he is. And always going at life with a whoop. At that time his struggles as an artist had just begun, and he tackled them with firm-set teeth, living chiefly by the defiance that was in him. I and others were literally infected by his faith in life and the future. I felt so safe in his presence, and, besides, he was always treating me with a sort of awkward chivalry that rather touched me. Then came the Spring! You don't know what the Spring means at Paris. It is as if one were lifted out of one's own self; and I felt such a sweet longing once more to mean something to another human being. And one evening, when we were standing together on Montmartre, looking out over the million-thronged city that he was to conquer some time, we made an agreement for life. Of course, there was n't much to live on, but nevertheless we made a little home for ourselves, and once more I had a delicious sense of meaning in my existence — of a meaning that reached beyond the passing moment. I knew and felt also that I meant something to his art — I was almost as much a part of it as he was himself.

MRS. BORNEMAN

But why did n't you just marry in the ordinary way, seeing that you had a home and meant to stay together anyhow?

KAREN

Why, that was something we might just as well have done, but we did n't care about it for our own sake. After all, it has only a meaning when the children come, and then there is always time enough.

PROFESSOR (*sharply*) And you owed no consideration to *us*?

KAREN

He would n't have stood the test as a son-in-law in this house.

[*The Professor flinches at the reference and makes no reply.*

MRS. BORNEMAN (*disapprovingly*)

Karen! [*Pause.*

KAREN

Well, thus everything looked bright and pleasant for a couple of years, until one fine day —

MRS. BORNEMAN

What then?

KAREN (*sadly*)

Until one day I saw that it was nothing but a mirage. He was deceiving me —

PROFESSOR

Of course. What was there to prevent him?

KAREN

Oh, things of that kind occur in regular marriages also.

MRS. BORNEMAN

And then?

KAREN

Then I broke off our relation at once and irrevocably. The foundation on which it was built had collapsed. — And well it was, when it happened, that we had no children. — Of course, as I tell it now, it sounds so dispassionate and commonplace, but at that time, at the moment when I knew with certainty, it was as if the whole world had gone to pieces about me, and as if only one thing had remained on top of the piled-up fragments: a twisted and caricatured

image of the man I had trusted and respected. Where I had been blind before, there I became all at once clear-eyed, mercilessly clear-eyed — for the first time since we had begun to live together I noticed that he was eating with his knife! (*After a brief pause*) Yes, thus looks the life-course of your "ruined" child!

PROFESSOR

Yes, indeed, a ruined child of a ruined time, who can call *that* a defence! But what can be expected of a time that refuses to see any difference between chastity and lewdness? But, believe me, punishment will not be lacking — well-earned punishment!

KAREN

I can see no cause for punishment, either of myself or others.

PROFESSOR

As long as you don't want to see this, there can be no chance of salvation!

KAREN

Of course, it would have been ever so much more easy for me if, while I was still quite young, some presentable man, with all his papers in perfect order and a financially secure future, had come and asked for me —

PROFESSOR

More easy for you! Who says that life is to be easy? Where is *that* written? It is exactly that kind of opinions that form the devil's bait. And yet I could have forgiven you everything — your wantonness and your defiance — if you had taken the consequences and had a child! If you had had ten illegitimate children — better that than none at all!

But you have arrogantly defied the very commandments of nature, which are nothing but the commandments of God!

KAREN

Do you really think I acted out of arrogance? Do you think I am a perfect monster of a woman, who has never felt any longing for a baby? Not *me* does your anger hit, but that society which will not regard it as an inevitable duty to recognize the right of every human being to have children — as a right, mark you, and not as it is now: a privilege reserved for the richest and the poorest. There are thousands of us to whom this right is denied — thousands of men as well as women. But we, too, are human beings, with love longings and love instincts, and we will not let us be cheated out of the best thing life holds!

PROFESSOR (*with strong indignation*)

And I 'll tell you this much: old as I am, I will not grant myself a single day's rest during the years that are left me, but will keep on brandishing the rod of discipline which our time so badly needs. If the Lord has meant anything at all by giving me a strumpet for daughter, it must be that. Believe me, you shall not have sinned in vain!

MRS. BORNEMAN (*reprovingly*)

Kristen!

KAREN (*angrily*) *Strumpet* of a daughter — that 's just the cry raised at us by those philistines who base their properly established marriages on the most sordid calculations, with the sole object in view of putting into the world a new lot of equally sordid philistines! The only thing still wanting would be that

those people were allowed to look down upon us, and to rule us, who have to pay for their children, but who don't care in addition to let ourselves be robbed of the most beautiful among the passions bestowed on man.

PROFESSOR

It was bestowed on man for the service of a certain purpose — a purpose that is the end of life itself.

KAREN

Life has no other ends than those we make for ourselves! — *Strumpet* of a daughter — once before today that word was thrown into my face by the high and mighty gentleman who did me the honor of proposing to me. Our "liberal" doctor! If I had been a widow or a divorced woman — he would have taken me! But I had merely loved — and it offended his "sense of beauty!" And he shuddered at me as if I had been plague-stricken! That's the way our liberalism thinks and feels — our "established" liberalism. It establishes *man's* liberty — oh, mercy, yes! But believe me, the day will come when we, too, will demand it as our right — demand the chance to live our own lives as we choose and as we can, without being held worse on that account. Of course, I know that this is not an ideal, but merely a makeshift, meant to serve until at last a time comes which recognizes the right of every human being to continue its life through the race.

PROFESSOR (*terrified, staring into vacancy*)

Rather insanity than that!

KAREN

You have no knowledge either of our time or of life as both really are. I have lived where the struggle

for bread is carried on with clenched fists, and there, I can assure you, many things look different from what they do in the quiet study of a university professor. — But I believe *you* understand me, mother, and that, in your innermost heart, you admit that I am right.

MRS. BORNEMAN

I wash my hands of it, Karen — I don't dare to think that far —

KAREN

All right, then! But I can assure you — although my *own* fate does n't seem so very enviable — that I would n't change with my poor respectable sister. I *have*, after all, lived for a time during those few years of youth that are granted us human beings only once in our lifetime, and that will never, never come back again. What have those other ones got out of their enforced duty and virtue except bitterness — bitterness and emptiness? I have, after all, felt the fullness of life within me while there was still time, and I don't regret it!

PROFESSOR (*struggling not to become overwhelmed by his emotion*) I recall the evening you were born, Karen — it had cost your mother many pangs — and the first time I went in to look at you. Then I went into my closet and thanked the Lord because a new little soul had been entrusted to my care. At that time I did n't think that one day, as an old man, I should have to live through the sorrow of seeing my own child delivered into the hands of Satan! (*Once more he sinks together*)

MRS. BORNEMAN (*goes up to him and strokes him gently*) Have pity on your father!

KAREN (*observing her parents with deep emotion*)

Yes — I do pity you, father! Don't think my heart is made of stone. — The sorrow I have done *you* cannot be greater than the one I feel within myself at this moment, when perhaps I see you for the last time! But how can I help that I am the child of a time that you don't understand? We have never wanted to hurt each other, of course — but I suppose it is the law of life that nothing new can come into the world without pain — (*She goes out quietly*)

CURTAIN

LYNGGAARD & CO.

A DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS

1905

PERSONS

LYNGGAARD . . . Owner of the Lynggaard Distilleries

HARRIET . . . . . His wife

JACOB, ESTRID . . . . . Their children

MIKKELSEN, *a theologian and retired high school teacher* . . . . . Father of Mrs. Lynggaard

GEORGE HEYMANN, Manager of the Lynggaard Distilleries

MRS. OLSEN . . . . . A widow

EDWARD . . . . . Her son

A SERVANT at the Lynggaards'

The action, which takes place in our own day, is laid in the Lynggaard residence, near Copenhagen, and lasts from one afternoon to the next.

LYNGGAARD & CO.

THE FIRST ACT

A large, expensively furnished drawing-room.

A very wide doorway, covered by draperies of thick velvet, leads to the conservatory which lies back of the drawing-room. To the right of the doorway is a window with small deep-set panes. There are two doors in each one of the side walls. The rear door at the right leads to the hall; the forward door on the same side, to Lynggaard's private room; the rear door at the left, to the dining-room, and the forward door on that side, to Mrs. Lynggaard's private sitting-room.

Strict consistency of style has not been aimed at, but several conspicuous pieces of furniture — cabinets, a chest of drawers, mirrors — are rococo. Tables and chairs are scattered about the room in convenient groups.

The centre of the left wall is occupied by a stove, artistically executed in black marble. All the walls are covered by splendid canvases belonging to the famous Lynggaard collection. Miniature statues and precious vases take the place of bric-à-brac.

It is early evening in October. A few of the pear-shaped bulbs in the pendant electrolier are lit up.

The Servant is arranging the coffee-table at the right in the foreground. After having regulated the alcohol lamp under the hanging pot, he goes over to

the stove, takes a look at a thermometer and puts more wood on the fire; finally he withdraws to the rear of the room in a waiting position.

Estrid, eighteen years old, light-haired, enters from the dining-room, leaving the door ajar behind her.

ESTRID (*with a friendly nod at the Servant, who stands at attention*) Thank you. We 'll look after ourselves.

[*The Servant goes out to the right. Estrid walks around for a while as if lost in thought. Then she returns to the dining-room, whence the sound of voices has been issuing in the meantime.*

ESTRID (*clapping her hands*)

Listen here! You must come now. The coffee is ready.

[*Estrid goes up to the coffee-table. Lynggaard and Mikkelsen appear in the doorway. Lynggaard is a tall man in the later fifties. His manners are easy without being careless. He is dressed in a comfortable sack coat — as it would never occur to him to put on evening dress for dinner when no guests were expected. His father-in-law, Mikkelsen, the former high school teacher, is erect and buoyant in spite of his seventy years. He is white-haired and wears a white, pointed beard. He is always dressed in a black frock coat, looks very distinguished, and reminds one of a marquis from the days of the Second Empire. For the moment both are surrounded by the atmosphere of satisfaction produced by a good dinner. They have only taken a few steps into the room, when Lynggaard stops Mikkelsen, turns around and shapes his right hand into a tube,*

through which he studies some object in the dining-room.

LYNGGAARD

You ought to have a look at it from here. Like this. Splendid, is n't it? I think, however, it should hang a little lower.

MIKKELSEN

What did you say the painter's name was?

LYNGGAARD

Watts — George Watts. This is his famous "Irish Famine." It 's in the Holland House at London.

MIKKELSEN

You don't mean to say it is a copy?

LYNGGAARD

Copy! What are you talking of? It 's a sketch — the original sketch made by the master himself.

MIKKELSEN (*with a crafty twinkle in his eyes*)

Well — and the price of it?

LYNGGAARD (*winking at him to be quiet*)

Just see how that light in the background harmonizes with the mood of the picture. And the figures! Do you notice how hopelessly the man is staring into vacancy? I don't think hunger and distress have ever found a more striking expression. Look at his clenched fists — that fellow would be capable of indiscretions. And his wife knows it. See how she is putting her hand on his to calm him. And then that starved baby at her empty breast! You get cold shivers along your spine if you continue to look at those staring eyes of his. That 's what I call misery — misery brought to the verge of desperate self-help. Splendid! Marvellous! (*They come further into the room*) And as to the price — it 's like

putting your money into four per cent. government bonds.

ESTRID (*serving the coffee*)

Now, grandfather, the coffee is getting cold.

MIKKELSEN

Thanks, dear — just a small cup.

[*Lynggaard and Mikkelsen sit down at the table.*

LYNGGAARD

And then to think that it 's the only Watts in this country!

[*Mrs. Lynggaard enters from the dining-room, closing the door behind her. She is forty-five, but looks older. Her figure is slender and refined. Her face indicates stagnation and introspection mixed with a suggestion of suffering. She wears a very simple black dress, which combines with her noiseless manner of moving about to make the beholder think of a nun. She sits down quietly at her usual place by the coffee-table, where her piece of knitting, with its long wooden needles, has already been laid out for her by Estrid. She makes the impression of being very nervous.*

ESTRID (*with the coffee pot*)

Large or small cup, mother?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Thank you, I don't want any.

[*Estrid pours out a cup for herself and sits down. Mrs. Lynggaard takes hold of her knitting. The coffee is drunk in silence. Then the gentlemen attend to their cigars, while Estrid lights a cigarette.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Oh, that smoking, Estrid —!

ESTRID

Oh, what! I smoke only one a day — while you are looking.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Are you done with your lessons for the day?

ESTRID

I am ahead, if you please. [*Brief pause.*

MIKKELSEN

Well, the summer is gone again.

LYNGGAARD

Did your trip tire you?

MIKKELSEN

So little that I am surprised at it.

ESTRID

Tell me, grandfather, did n't anything of interest happen to you in all that time — something really exciting?

MIKKELSEN

No, thank heaven!

ESTRID

An elderly man of the world like you, who is going the rounds of his friends (*after a glance at her mother*) without anybody to watch over him, he might have a lot of fun.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Estrid — your language!

ESTRID

Were you bored, grandfather?

MIKKELSEN

Not more than I could bear. Oh, the summer vacation meant something else in those days when I was still a teacher and had to cram down religion and mathematics in the morning, while I was tutoring

in the afternoon. — But tell me now, what has happened to you, Essie?

ESTRID

To me? I should like to know what could happen to me? Oh, I don't know anything more tedious than our summers in the country. Then we don't see a single soul for five whole months.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

But we have peace.

ESTRID

I don't know anything more tedious than peace.

LYNGGAARD (*still full of his newly acquired treasure, says to Mikkelsen*) And do you know, it came within an inch of going to the Fürstenberg Gallery at Gothenburg.

MIKKELSEN

Oh — the "Famine" in the dining-room —

ESTRID

Now, if you have n't anything else to talk of but that tedious picture, I 'll rather go up to my room and read. — Oh, I must tell you, mother — Hansen came and asked me if we don't think he has given good care to the conservatory. There I was — none of us having been near it yet.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

And it 's a shame we have n't, Estrid. Let us go at once. Of course, it 's what he has been waiting for all the time.

[*She and Estrid rise and go toward the background, where Estrid turns on the electric light in the conservatory. The light shows between the draperies. Then they go into the conservatory, the draperies remaining parted after they have left.*

LYNGGAARD (*in a serious tone after a short pause*)
Tell me, what kind of impression do you get of Harriet?

MIKKELSEN
It seems to me as if she had hardly opened her mouth since I came home.

LYNGGAARD
So you have noticed it?

MIKKELSEN
What kind of summer has she had?

LYNGGAARD
Not the slightest change. Of course, I had to have another talk with Dr. Benzon.

MIKKELSEN
Well?

LYNGGAARD
Oh, he merely shrugged his shoulders and said: "Well, she 's in the difficult period."

MIKKELSEN
And yet I can't understand — not how it could go so far. If she had money troubles, then I could understand; but qualms because of having too much — I simply don't understand a word of the whole thing.

LYNGGAARD
And it 's getting worse and worse, I think. She can hardly sleep nights on account of her brooding.

MIKKELSEN
I can't see how it will be possible to bring her back to reason.

LYNGGAARD
Heaven knows, I do all I can to humor her notions. Personally, she is denying herself almost everything.

But I try neither to force nor to coax her. She has her full liberty.

MIKKELSEN

I suppose there is nothing else to do.

LYNGGAARD

Of her own will she is living in positive poverty. — Well, there is something I have n't even cared to let you know, as it seemed so perfectly ludicrous. But let me tell you now. During these last years, when, at rare intervals, we have been obliged to give a dinner, just so as not to offend people too much — and, of course, Estrid had to get out a little — then I have every time had to pay Harriet the exact cost of the party for distribution among her poor. What do you say to that?

[*Mikkelsen shakes his head.*

LYNGGAARD

I hate that kind of charity. And it is n't stinginess that makes me say so — you know that from year to year I give away quite a little myself, but always publicly. Whenever there is a cause with a lot of good names back of it, and with everything publicly reported and controlled, then you 'll also find on the lists: " Peter Lynggaard, 500 crowns." But I insist that charity should be public. — And then I have to lie to her all the time. She cannot guess either what we make or what we spend. Or what I put into my art collection. Do you know to what extent I was bled on account of that last acquisition in there?

MIKKELSEN

I noticed you did n't want to come out with it before.

LYNGGAARD

20,000.

MIKKELSEN

20,000! That 's a lot of money so near the end of the month.

LYNGGAARD

She thinks it cost one thousand — so now you know. The other day she wanted me to pay " poor tax " on account of my art investments also, but I 'll be hanged if I do.

MIKKELSEN

That would be the only thing wanting.

LYNGGAARD (*with a sigh*)

I can't say it 's very pleasant. And yet I had hoped matters would improve when Jacob left home — for as long as he was here, they did nothing but turn each other's heads with their speculations.

MIKKELSEN

I pity you — indeed, I do!

LYNGGAARD

Everything puts her in a funereal mood these days. A while ago I expected to give her a fine occasion, when I had to tell her we must be ready for another strike.

MIKKELSEN

Have you to face that kind of entertainment again?

LYNGGAARD

I hope, with the help of God — and of Heymann — that we 'll escape it. But you never can tell — and so I wanted to prepare her.

MIKKELSEN

I suppose a strike would be rather inconvenient just now?

LYNGGAARD

Inconvenient! I 'll tell you this much: a strike at this moment might lead to a very serious crisis.

MIKKELSEN

Oh, well — a solid old business!

LYNGGAARD

Let me tell you candidly: the competition with the Consolidated Distilleries has gradually been carried to such a point that, literally, we are incapable of standing a raise of wages of — let us say, half a crown a day per head — if there is to be any sense in running the plant at all. You cannot imagine what it has meant to keep the ship floating of late — just working the pumps all the time, I tell you. And suppose it had been those other fellows instead of me who had Heymann to run things — we should have been done for.

MIKKELSEN

Oh, is that the way big capital is fixed? (*Putting his hand on his coat so that he can feel the pocketbook inside*) It makes me feel as if my little pension as teacher were actually beginning to swell.

LYNGGAARD

Do you know what a strike would cost us at this moment?

MIKKELSEN

Well?

LYNGGAARD

Suppose we put it at one thousand crowns a day, right out of our pockets. That 's no small matter, I should say.

MIKKELSEN

I should notice it —

LYNGGAARD

Of course, it 's my fault, because I have never put aside any reserve funds. That I admit. Well, we 'll

have to trust in Heymann. He has steered us past a few reefs before now. (*He picks up a cigar which he studies in a preoccupied fashion without lighting it — and he shows that there is something of importance on his mind, which he wants to have said*) And there is something else, of still greater importance, that I might as well tell you at the same time. There is a great change at hand —

MIKKELSEN

My dear fellow, you look quite overcome —

LYNGGAARD (*putting away the cigar*)

Next Monday the Lynggaard Distilleries will be incorporated as a stock company.

MIKKELSEN (*startled*)

What 's that — as a stock company?

LYNGGAARD

Yes.

MIKKELSEN

Next Monday. But, heavens and earth, Lynggaard, what does it mean?

LYNGGAARD

For this reason, I am glad you came home today. For Harriet, I tell you, is about to lose her head completely on that account. And I thought that perhaps you —

MIKKELSEN

Really, Lynggaard, I can't get over it. Is it — is it in order to get through the strike?

LYNGGAARD

Not at all. There are entirely different reasons. — You see, if I had a son —

MIKKELSEN

You don't count Jacob?

LYNGGAARD

Have you forgotten how he used to look when he was spreading himself in the easy-chairs here? It *was n't* much — but served up with tremendous pretensions. Just the way he had of saying *modern* — have you never heard him say *modern?* — it was enough to make you explode. No, Jacob is fit for only one thing on this earth: to get an endowed bed in some asylum as quickly as possible.

MIKKELSEN

And that 's how you came to think of forming a stock company?

LYNGGAARD

Well, to begin with, I can't say that the thought of it appealed very much to me. I have been accustomed to a personal relationship with the plant ever since I was a child. And then all of a sudden to find myself quite impersonally on the outside, as a director in a stock company, as a mere cutter of coupons — well, of course, times have changed. In the days of my father we were personally acquainted with every single workman in the place. His family relations, his sorrows, his joys — we had a share in all of it. In a word — regular patriarchal conditions. And on the part of the men — deference; absolute deference. Those times are past, you see. — Now it has gone so far that I am never sure my lordly workmen will respond if I happen to greet them first. Or suppose it should be a question of some kind of negotiation. — In the days of my father wages were regulated by agreement between two persons equally independent. And nowadays — if I were to go over to my own plant for the purpose of negotiating with

my workmen — why, they would think me crazy. I should n't be the least bit surprised at being turned out of my own premises in accordance with the warning displayed everywhere: "No outsiders admitted." No, in these days we negotiate like great powers at war — on neutral territory — through ambassadors, congresses, and —

MIKKELSEN

So the distillery is going to be put into stock.

LYNGGAARD (*persisting with his own line of thought*)

And then it is true, as Heymann has discovered, that I simply don't take an interest in conducting the business as I used to. And I don't have to, either. Heymann looks to everything, and he *has* no other interests. And now, when old age may be expected to come knocking at my door any day, this is a convenient way of winding up the business while there is still time —

MIKKELSEN

Heymann will take charge of the management then?

LYNGGAARD

Heymann is going to be managing director.

MIKKELSEN

So-o. And Jacob, the heir-apparent.

LYNGGAARD

Jacob will inherit the coupons.

MIKKELSEN

And the shears. But what made you think of this all at once?

LYNGGAARD

Oh, originally it was rather Heymann's idea than mine.

MIKKELSEN (*with emphasis*)
Well, well.

LYNGGAARD
One day he turned up with the whole plan ready, and all calculations made, down to the smallest detail.

MIKKELSEN
Exactly as when he was one of my pupils. That boy could never make himself raise a decimal. It caused him outright suffering — physical suffering — to stop at anything not absolutely correct — that is, if he was dealing with applied numbers, such as crowns, or dollars, or anything like that.

LYNGGAARD
Oh, of course. — And then Heymann and I have been talking back and forth all summer, as often as I came into the city.

MIKKELSEN
Well, my dear fellow, all I can say is this: if it 's Heymann's idea, then you don't need to worry.

LYNGGAARD (*with finality*)
It is only a question of getting accustomed to it. — Oh, you have n't seen the picture in artificial light. Now I 'll show you. (*He opens the dining-room door and picks up an electric lamp which stands on a small table and has a long wire attached to it, so that it may conveniently be moved to any part of the room; he turns on the lamp and holds it so that the rays, which are collected by a reflector, fall across the dining-room*) Delightful!

MIKKELSEN (*with a glance around the drawing-room*)
Soon you won't have place for any more, Lynggaard. How much have you spent on your collection, altogether?

LYNGGAARD (*wrapped in contemplation of the picture*) Those eyes — they are the embodiment of all human misery! (*In reply to Mikkelsen*) Oh, fully one million.

MIKKELSEN

To get that much, a goodly number of drinks have to be consumed — that is, by other people.

LYNGGAARD

You are perfectly right. But how did you want me to use my money, anyhow?

MIKKELSEN

Oh, of course!

LYNGGAARD (*turning out the lamp and putting it back in its place*) I might have torn down this shed here, and put up a more pretentious residence in its place, with stables, and a park, and that sort of thing. But I have n't done so — out of humanitarian reasons.

MIKKELSEN

Humanitarian reasons?

LYNGGAARD

I mean, out of consideration for the workmen. It would only cause bad blood, if they were to have a palace before their eyes from day to day. And it seems to me that a humane employer *ought* to show that kind of consideration. Well, and then I think also there is something beautiful in the fact that all these people who have been drinking my whisky year after year, have been forced, without knowing it, to serve a great idea. You have to *lead* the masses — that, you see, is the main point. (*Pointing proudly at the pictures on the walls*) What you see about

you is the output of my plant transformed into its highest potency of refinement.

MIKKELSEN

Rectified, so to speak!

LYNGGAARD

Exactly. And if I ever succeed in realizing my cherished dream of building a special gallery for it, I shall bequeath the entire collection to the nation. (*With modesty*) That 's the only monument I want.

MIKKELSEN

The Lynggaard Collection. With two stars in Baedeker!

LYNGGAARD

For it would hurt me a great deal to think that some day it might be scattered all over the world.

MIKKELSEN

But what is there to prevent you from getting that gallery?

LYNGGAARD

The lack of half a million crowns, or more. Oh, if I could only keep from buying anything new for a few years! But I cannot. Every time there is an opportunity, I get caught. (*In a low voice*) I had actually to sell some real estate in order to raise those 20,000. I had already exceeded my allowance for the year. (*As Mrs. Lynggaard and Estrid return*) Sh!

ESTRID (*turning out the lights in the conservatory*)

Have you finished talking about that picture now?

MIKKELSEN

We have just finished.

[*Mikkelsen, Estrid and Mrs. Lynggaard resume their former seats. For lack of something better, Estrid*

picks up a piece of knitting like that on which her mother is occupied. Lynggaard, who has lit a cigar, walks about the room in a listless fashion.

MIKKELSEN

Hm — have you heard anything from Jacob recently?

ESTRID

He said in his last letter that he would stay through the Winter in Italy.

MIKKELSEN

Oh, is that so?

ESTRID (*after a brief pause*)

Do you know what I think?

MIKKELSEN

No.

ESTRID

I think Jacob is going to turn Catholic.

MIKKELSEN (*as if he could not be sure of what he heard*)

What — Catholic?

LYNGGAARD (*speaking where he happens to be at the moment, with his back turned to the rest*) Nonsense!

ESTRID

Now, don't you say so! At least, that was the only thing I could make out of his last letter. And besides, I think it would be becoming to him. I am sure it would fit splendidly with his smooth-shaven face and embroidered waistcoats.

LYNGGAARD (*making a wry face*)

And it is so modern!

[*Estrid gives vent to an appreciative giggle, without daring to look up.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*severely*)

It seems to me, you might speak with more respect of such things.

LYNGGAARD

Heavens, as far as I care, he may turn himself into a monk. What I *don't* want is to pay for his wax candles.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Peter!

LYNGGAARD

Councillor Bang has told me in strictest confidence what it has cost him to have his son come home a Catholic. The boys who take that turn are an expensive lot.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

You have never understood Jacob.

LYNGGAARD

Oh, I don't think he is so very hard to see through. A fellow who has never in his life done a thing showing the slightest evidence of motive or purpose. — At his age I had graduated with honors from the Polytechnic and was running the plant.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Well, he may do so yet.

LYNGGAARD

Not if I can help it.

MIKKELSEN (*trying to smooth matters out*)

I had an idea that Jacob was bringing home all the latest tricks in the distillery business.

LYNGGAARD

The Lord help us, is all I can say.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

None of us can tell what returns he may bring home from his trip.

LYNGGAARD

No; I, at least, have n't received any reports. (*To*

Mikkelsen) You ought to have seen him as he appeared in my room the day before he started. (*Pointing to a family portrait in oval frame*) He was dressed up like his own great-grandfather, Peter Jacob Lynggaard, a worshipful whisky distiller of this city — with sideboards, stock, and all. One of his hands rested on the back of a chair, while the other one was tucked into the breast of his coat. To this senile youngster I permitted myself to address the following words: "Now, my son, have all the fun you care for while you are abroad" — at which the gentleman shrugged his shoulders indulgently — "and I 'll give you the money, if you will only promise me for once, incidentally, to pull yourself together and learn — anything."

MIKKELSEN

A very generous offer.

LYNGGAARD

Less than three months later there came a fool letter to Harriet — for, of course, he does n't correspond with me — saying that, unless his soul should perish utterly, or some such nonsense, he must get away from the factory towns, where everything was worse than in hell. And so the fellow runs off to Italy because there are no factory chimneys in that country.

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*sharply*)

You are now talking of things, Peter, for the understanding of which you are wholly unqualified.

LYNGGAARD

I know it, my dear. I lack a sense for the higher spiritual life of this house — being nothing but a whisky distiller.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Jacob happens to possess a more refined nature —

MIKKELSEN

Which he got from me.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

And recently he has been passing through a serious spiritual crisis.

LYNGGAARD

All right! If I can afford to buy paintings that cost — (*on the verge of betraying himself*) — that cost one thousand crowns, I can also afford to have a son with a spiritual crisis. All I permit myself to remark is that I have no illusions in regard to Jacob. I used to do a lot of worrying about it until Heymann spoke the saving word: stock company.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Did it ever occur to you that some day your son might call you to account for it?

LYNGGAARD

Call me to account?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

That 's what I said. Some day your son will step into this room, mature and masterful, ready to take his place in the business, and then he will find himself on the outside, without having received a word of warning from you. But I know very well who is back of it. Heymann it is who has managed to blind you and ensnare you. Ever since the day he first put his foot in this place — ever since the first time I beheld his treacherous face —

ESTRID (*unpleasantly impressed*)

But, mother —

LYNGGAARD

You have always been down on Jews, Harriet — that 's all there is to it.

MIKKELSEN

Precisely!

LYNGGAARD

And it 's the only thing you can say against Heymann. And he has — with my guidance, of course — made the Lynggaard Distilleries the foremost in the country. That 's all! But what 's the use of our chewing over that old story again?

SERVANT (*entering*)

Mr. Heymann.

LYNGGAARD

Ask Mr. Heymann to come in.

[*The Servant goes out.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Was that also necessary?

ESTRID (*giving a few hurried touches to her hair*)

But we have to receive him decently the first evening —

MIKKELSEN

Are you going to discuss the stock company?

LYNGGAARD

Only a few minor points. We 'll organize next Monday.

[*Mrs. Lynggaard takes out her watch and compares the time of it with that of the clock on the mantelpiece. The Servant opens the door for Heymann. George Heymann, a very distinguished looking gentleman of thirty-five, enters with a portfolio under his arm. His manner is self-possessed and shows a certain aristocratic, but not at all offensive, for-*

mality. His jet-black, glossy hair is carefully parted on one side. His face is striking, but not of marked Jewish type. His smoothly shaven cheeks show a bluish tint. There is both warmth and depth in his eyes at times, and when he wants to, his entire face may be lit up by a delicate smile. Heymann bows ceremoniously to Mrs. Lynggaard, who responds very stiffly. Estrid rises and holds out her hand to him.

ESTRID

Good evening, Mr. Heymann?

HEYMANN

Good evening, Miss Lynggaard. You have got a nice burn.

ESTRID

Yes, and freckles.

HEYMANN

But it 's becoming to you.

ESTRID (*who has been trying to control herself, bursts suddenly into open laughter*) Goodness gracious, Mr. Heymann — where 's your moustache?

HEYMANN

It flatters me extremely to have you ask for it.

ESTRID

Oh, how vain you are! So you want to be a regular Adonis?

HEYMANN

My reasons were quite prosaic, Miss Lynggaard. I could n't keep myself from chewing it when I was alone.

[*Estrid shakes her head, as if to say: "I don't believe you!"*

MIKKELSEN (*having risen, holds out his hand cordially*) Happy to see Your Highness again!

HEYMANN (*replies with a smile only, as he shakes hands with Mikkelsen; then he turns to Lynggaard*) Perhaps you are not in a mood for business tonight?

LYNGGAARD

On the contrary. Let us get at it at once.

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*rising*)

Before you and Mr. Heymann begin, Peter, perhaps you would let me have a couple of minutes. There is something I should like very much to talk over with you at once.

LYNGGAARD

That depends on Heymann.

HEYMANN

Oh, please — I have plenty of time.

LYNGGAARD (*to his wife*) Should we go into your room? (*They go out to the left*)

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*turning around in the doorway*) I think it 's time for you to go up and start on your lessons, Estrid, dear.

ESTRID

Pooh — I 'll be done with that in no time. (*To Heymann*) Now, Mr. Heymann, I know what you are going to look like.

HEYMANN

I fear the worst.

ESTRID

You 'll look like a German actor, or like one of those Italian tenors — a real heart-killer — mm!

HEYMANN

Thanks!

ESTRID

But you were much more awe-inspiring before. For

then you looked like a mixture of circus director and lion-tamer. Good-night, Mr. Heymann.

HEYMANN

Good-night, Miss Lynggaard. It seems to me that your likenesses come from a rather strange world.

ESTRID

Oh, there is always grandfather, you know, when I want to go to the city.

MIKKELSEN

Hush!

ESTRID

Anyhow, you are not quite to be trusted, Mr. Heymann. You notice, I hope, that mother sends me away when you are here. And I obey her, as you see. (*She goes out to the right, giving him a roguish nod as she is about to leave the room*)

MIKKELSEN (*who has been an interested observer of the little scene*) So, Heymann, we are going to issue stock?

HEYMANN

The trend of things is in that direction.

MIKKELSEN

May I ask by whom the invitation to subscribe for stock is signed?

HEYMANN

First of all, of course, by the Under-Secretary —

MIKKELSEN

Thank you, then the rest don't matter.

HEYMANN (*smiling*)

Perhaps not.

MIKKELSEN

Otherwise he is not a bad fellow to get in connection with —

HEYMANN

The Under-Secretary is a *very* agreeable man to deal with.

MIKKELSEN (*looking hard at him for a moment*)

You have my respect, Heymann.

HEYMANN

Hope I won't be unworthy of it.

MIKKELSEN

And my admiration. My deepest admiration.

HEYMANN

I am glad not to have disappointed the expectations of my old teacher.

MIKKELSEN

You become managing director — ?

HEYMANN

I suppose I 'll remain what I have been during the last ten years.

MIKKELSEN

In regard to usefulness, yes. But the title of director is not to be sneezed at.

HEYMANN

It will make me a little more independent. But then I am about old enough for that.

MIKKELSEN

Indeed, you are. " The devil stay a servant longer ! " — But candidly speaking, Heymann, I cannot sufficiently admire the very convenient moment you have chosen for this reorganization —

HEYMANN

To a large extent it has been chosen by the circumstances.

MIKKELSEN

Let it go at that. But then the *circumstances* have chosen a very convenient moment.

HEYMANN

You say that so — meaningly.

MIKKELSEN

I mean simply that you should be grateful to the circumstances because they occurred during the summer vacation, when you could have my dear, easy-going son-in-law all to yourself, free from any influence but that of your clear-headed reasoning —

HEYMANN

In all seriousness — it had to happen just now — for many reasons.

MIKKELSEN

I think so, too. And there is another piece of luck that seems almost providential: Jacob, the heir-apparent — abroad. You admit it?

HEYMANN (*speaking like one not to be trifled with*)

Yes, if Mr. Jacob should have in mind to offer any opposition, then I admit it is lucky for the business that he is away for the moment.

MIKKELSEN

Your hand, if you please. (*They smile at each other with what almost amounts to mutual understanding*) What was it I said long ago, while you were still my pupil?

"For conquest and honor was Heymann born:
It 's plainly writ in the stars."

HEYMANN (*in a lighter tone*)

Well, well — it was n't yesterday that I sat on the pupil's bench and you at the teacher's desk, Mr.

Mikkelsen. But I have not yet forgotten what I owe you.

MIKKELSEN

You are the only one of my pupils in whom I can take any pride. And do you know why I think that 's so? Because you had me in mathematics only.

HEYMANN (*with a smile*)

Well, of course, there were reasons why I did n't have you in religion, too.

MIKKELSEN

And you may praise yourself lucky on that account. Nothing but bunglers have come out of the boys I had in both subjects. And how could it be otherwise? Of what use was it that I gave the boys a correct idea of life in mathematics, teaching them how to figure interest and compound interest up to ten and twenty per cent. a year? Of what use was it, I say, when, during my courses in religion, I had to hammer into their heads that whosoever loans money and takes interest upon it, he is guilty before the Lord? Of what use was it that, in my hours of mathematics, I taught them how to invest money in notes and stocks and government bonds, when, right on top of it, I had to forbid them to lay up treasures which moth and rust corrupt, or to enrich themselves unrighteously by Mammon? How could they become anything but bunglers? No, Heymann, praise yourself lucky on account of your one-sided upbringing. It has been fruitful.

HEYMANN

And yet there was an occasion when I felt glad that you were also teaching religion. Well, I suppose you have long ago forgotten that story, Mr. Mikkelsen?

It happened during one of your hours that my comrades were teasing me in the way of children — for children are so often merciless — and one of them used the word *sheeny* so that you heard it. Then you pulled the fellow out on the floor and gave him such a beating that I was afraid you might kill him outright. It 's the only time I can recall you to have given a boy a serious licking. (*With a touch of feeling in his voice*) I think, from that day, I could have gone through fire for you — for a thing like that a poor Jewish boy can never forget, and particularly not when it is the religious teacher who —

MIKKELSEN (*pressing back a tear*)

But it happened in mathematics. (*Confidentially*) May I give you a piece of good advice in regard to what you are up to now: (*with emphasis*) strike while the iron is hot!

LYNGGAARD (*returning from the left*)

Now, Heymann, I am at your service.

[*Lynggaard and Heymann go out to the right. Immediately afterwards Mrs. Lynggaard enters from the left. She resumes her former position and begins to knit again. Mikkelsen walks back and forth for a while, watching her. It is plain that his searching looks make her nervous. Pause.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*looking at her watch and comparing it with the clock on the mantelpiece*)

Is n't the clock fast?

MIKKELSEN (*taking out his watch*)

No, rather a little slow. [*Pause.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Did you have good weather all the time?

MIKKELSEN

It rained all the time.

[*Mrs. Lynggaard looks again at her watch.*

MIKKELSEN (*stopping right in front of her*)

You are ill, Harriet!

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*pretending to be surprised*)

What has put that into your head?

MIKKELSEN

You are shaking as you sit there.

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*who barely can keep her knitting still*) I? Not at all.

MIKKELSEN

You have acted peculiarly all the time, and now you cannot even control your hands. Just see, how they are shaking!

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*resolutely putting away the knitting*) Oh, well, then I suppose I am ill.

MIKKELSEN (*sitting down beside her*)

Don't you think it might be of help if we talked the matter over — if we had a real heart-to-heart talk?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

You would n't understand me, father; and even if you did, it would n't help.

MIKKELSEN

You mean then, that you are too ill to be cured?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

At times I have feared it.

MIKKELSEN

I am sorry for your husband, Harriet.

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*suspiciously*)

Has he been complaining to you?

MIKKELSEN

Never. But I can see for myself.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

For I don't think those about me have any reason for complaint. To that extent I have been able to control myself — so far, at least.

MIKKELSEN

Don't you think it might help if you went abroad for a time — you and Lynggaard and Estrid?

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*shaking her head*)

There is only one who understands me.

MIKKELSEN

And that is?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Jacob.

MIKKELSEN

Oh. — Well, would n't you like to join Jacob abroad this Winter?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Out there it would n't be of any use. If Jacob were here, he might rid me of it —

MIKKELSEN

Rid you of what?

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*with complete self-abandon*)

This horrible dread that is always with me.

MIKKELSEN

So what troubles you is still — your wealth?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

It has nearly driven me out of my reason.

MIKKELSEN

Then it is more serious than I thought.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

It is about as serious as it would be safe to let it become. [*Pause.*

MIKKELSEN

Tell me, Harriet, as you look back, about what time do you think it began?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

It began about ten years ago. During the big strike. But I can hardly bear to think of it even. It was so dreadful.

MIKKELSEN

Oh, heavens, was it that story about — what was it his name was — Olsen?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

I don't think, father, that you have any idea about the real nature of that " story " — as you call it.

MIKKELSEN

No, it happened before I moved into the house.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

It was the first time I became aware what a strike means.

MIKKELSEN

But otherwise you got through with it splendidly — thanks to Heymann.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

You did n't live through it, father. Or you would n't be speaking like that.

MIKKELSEN

What happened to him — that man Olsen? He killed himself, did he?

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*absorbed in her memories*)

I shall never forget the day when the people went back to work. I was watching them from my bedroom window. For four months they had been starving — starving, do you understand? — they and theirs. Then they turned up again one winter morn-

ing before daylight, and there they stood and shivered in the yards. They had no over-clothes, of course, and they were shaking both from cold and from weakness. And then their faces were all covered with beards, so that one could n't recognize them. There they stood and waited a long time, a very long time. . . . At last Heymann appeared in the doorway and read something from a paper. It was the conditions of surrender, I suppose. None of them looked up. Then, as they were about to walk in and begin working, Heymann stopped them by holding up his hand, and he said something I could n't hear. But after a little while I saw Olsen standing all by himself in a cleared space. (*A shiver runs through her at the recollection*) Once I saw a picture of an execution in a prison yard. . . . It lasted only a few seconds. Then Olsen said a few words to his comrades and walked away, looking white as a ghost. The crowd opened up to let him pass through. Then the rest stood there for a while looking so strangely depressed and not knowing what to do. And at last they went in, one by one, bent and broken. . . .

MIKKELSEN

Olsen was n't allowed to go back to work?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

It was he who had been their leader, and it was his fault that they had held out as long as they did. And then Olsen began to look for work elsewhere, but none of the other companies would have anything to do with him.

MIKKELSEN (*shrugging his shoulders*)

War is war.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

A few months later, as I was taking a walk, I was stopped on the street by Olsen's wife. I tell you, the way she looked made my heart shrink within me. Her husband was completely broken down, she told me. And on top of it all he had taken to drink. Everything she and the children could scrape together, he spent on whisky. She herself was so far gone with her eighth child that she would soon have to quit work. — Then I went home to my husband and begged and prayed him to take Olsen back and make a man of him again. It was the first time during our marriage that I saw him beside himself with rage. There came into his eyes such an evil expression that I wish I had never seen it, for I have never since been able to forget it entirely. But, of course, I guessed who was back of it. (*With emphasis*) Then I did the most humiliating thing I have ever done: I went in secret to Heymann and pleaded for that discharged workman.

MIKKELSEN

Well, and Heymann?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Since that moment I hate Heymann. There I was, humbling myself before him. And he measured me with cold eyes and said: "If I am to be in charge of this plant, madam, I must ask once for all and absolutely, that no outsiders interfere with the running of it."

MIKKELSEN

I don't see that he could have done anything else.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

What I cannot forgive myself is that I let myself

be imposed upon by that man. I behaved like a coward. At that moment I should have gone to my husband and said: "This is what has happened — now you must choose between Heymann and me!" But I was so cowardly that I did n't even tell my husband what I had done.

MIKKELSEN

Nor was it proper for you to go behind your husband's back like that.

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*with an expression of abject horror in her fixed gaze*) A little afterwards this thing happened. It was one of the first warm summer days, and I was walking in the garden with Jacob. At that time a splendid old chestnut tree was growing in one corner. And there, in the midst of green leaves and singing birds, Olsen was hanging, cold and dead. And the flies were crawling in and out of his face. . . . (*She trembles visibly*)

MIKKELSEN

Yes, life is cruel.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

And there I perceived for the first time how utterly poor a human being may become. Anything so pitiful and miserable I had never seen before. There was no sign of underclothing between his trousers and the vest. And I don't know why, but it seemed almost as if this was what hurt me most — much more than that he had hanged himself. . . . And since that day I have n't known a single hour of happiness. [*Pause.*

MIKKELSEN (*who has risen and is walking to and fro*) There is only one small thing that you have left out of the story. A small thing that I happen to know.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

What is it?

MIKKELSEN

One day during the strike Heymann had to pass a group of workmen in front of the plant here. Just as he was walking by, one of them cried something after him in a loud voice, and then all the rest of them set up a yell. The voice was that of Olsen, and what he cried out was: "*Dirty Jew!*" — Perhaps that might change the story a little bit?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Not in the least!

MIKKELSEN

No-o?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

It was just what I kept saying within myself that day in Heymann's office.

MIKKELSEN

I am glad you did n't get to the point of saying it aloud.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

And since that day Olsen is haunting this house. He follows Heymann like a shadow, inseparably. And Heymann knows it. And I think he knows that I can see it. . . .

[*Mikkelsen shakes his head with a worried expression.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Since that day every cent I receive in this house is blood-money. It is sticky, and it clings to my fingers. There is a feeling to it like that of some coins I once received in change from a butcher, when I was a young girl —

MIKKELSEN

You are overwrought, Harriet.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Then He too was overwrought who said: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come and follow Me." For that I cannot do — I cannot do it —

MIKKELSEN

No, of course, you cannot.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

And yet it is so written.

MIKKELSEN

But it was not said to a wife with husband and children, but to a young man. And he could n't do it either. But who can assert that he was lost for that reason?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Lost or not lost — what do you think his life was from the moment he had heard those words? His life on this earth, I mean.

MIKKELSEN

History has kept no record of it.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

But I know. From that moment to the end of his days, he was suffering worse than if he had been in hell. (*She sinks together in despair*)

[*Pause.*

MIKKELSEN

Tell me, Harriet, has it ever occurred to you to have a sensible talk with Dr. Benzon?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Why should I have a talk with him?

MIKKELSEN

Oh, it is never possible to tell where the soul ends and the body begins —

MRS. LYNGGAARD

And I don't think Dr. Benzon knows either.

MIKKELSEN

Have you never taken anybody into your confidence?

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*after some consideration*)

Oh, several years ago I even went to see Pastor Madsen.

MIKKELSEN

Pastor Madsen — your own minister?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Yes.

MIKKELSEN (*suppressing a smile*)

Why did you go to see that lump of fat?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Oh, after all, one might expect him to have given life some thought.

MIKKELSEN

And what did Pastor Madsen have to say?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Before I went to him, I had searched the Bible from end to end, according to my best ability. There, I thought, it must be found in such manner that one might go by it.

MIKKELSEN

For such purposes it is a rather poor book.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

It has always been so easy for you to scoff, father.

MIKKELSEN

I am in dead earnest. The Bible is absolutely no

proper reading for capitalists. But tell me what Pastor Madsen said?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

My impression is that he tried to squirm out of it.

MIKKELSEN

Of course. Or I should have been very much mistaken in him.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

How can such a man be a minister?

MIKKELSEN

When you don't go to Pastor Madsen with any impertinent questions, there is nothing the matter with him at all. And for that matter, I was the man who recommended him to his present position.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

How could you do it?

MIKKELSEN

He was splendidly fitted for it. I had tutored him myself and knew him pretty well. You see, when Lynggaard proceeded to build a church of his own, there were certain reasons for it —

MRS. LYNGGAARD

After the big strike, you mean?

MIKKELSEN

Exactly. At that time I said to Lynggaard: "I don't think it will help, but if you want that kind of a man, you should take Kristen Barfod Madsen. For him I can vouch. He will preach what is wanted of him.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Yes, but he has to preach what is written in the Bible.

MIKKELSEN

His strength lies in the interpretation —

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Oh, I see. That, too! In a word, he let himself be tied.

MIKKELSEN

The term is too strong, Harriet. Entirely too strong. It actually suggests a contract. And I am not even sure that there was what is generally called a tacit agreement —

MRS. LYNGGAARD

How can you talk like that, father, without becoming aroused by your own words?

MIKKELSEN

Aroused? I am too old, my dear. I have seen too much. — And for that matter, we did the same thing in regard to the school for the workmen's children and the teachers employed in it: we selected them with care.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Is that the way in which the existing society is being held together?

MIKKELSEN

Yes, about like that. (*Rubbing his hands complacently*) But, of course, it creaks in the joints now and then.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

And you can be a party to that kind of thing, father? I don't understand it.

MIKKELSEN

Oh, in the long run life might easily prove boresome, my dear, if it were not a little — higgledy-piggledy. . . .

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*looking hard at him*)
It seems almost as if you were taking that dread away from me —

MIKKELSEN
Well, my dear, there is really no reason to be so very solemn about the whole matter.

MRS. LYNGGAARD
For I have also been afraid that it might be insanity. That my own tormented brain produced all my worries. That perhaps there was nothing corresponding to it in the outside world —

MIKKELSEN (*rising*) Heavens! It is perfectly possible to look at the world from that side also. I merely think you should leave it to those who have reason for it. They 'll attend to it, you may be sure. (*He walks up and down with his hands folded behind him*)

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*following him with her eyes*)
It seems almost as if you had rid me of the last vestige of doubt by what you have just said. (*Rising with the mien of one having formed an inexorable decision*) Yes, that 's how I feel. (*Stopping her father with one hand and pointing with the other at the door leading into Lynggaard's room*) Do you know what 's happening in there? If not, I can tell you. From the time he broke the great strike up to this moment — for ten whole years — Heymann has been striving incessantly, day by day, to get all the power in his own hands. (*With increasing emotion*) And what is happening in there at this moment means that from now on Heymann is going to be in sole control of the business, and that the last trace of human consideration is to be extinguished! But once more during our lifetime we may come to stand face

to face, my dear Heymann, and it may prove that I am not the one I was the last time I measured my strength with yours!

MIKKELSEN

I am afraid you will draw the shorter straw.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

We 'll see. But I have made a high and holy promise to myself of one thing: that what 's going on in there shall never come to anything!

MIKKELSEN

Have you lost all sense and reason?

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*with a triumphant glance at him*)

Because, you see, Jacob —

MIKKELSEN (*staggered*)

Harriet!

[*Mrs. Lynggaard is already nodding as if in confirmation of what he is going to ask.*

MIKKELSEN

You have sent for Jacob?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Yes.

MIKKELSEN

And you expect him?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

In a few moments.

MIKKELSEN (*vehemently*)

And that you have dared — behind your husband's back?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Yes.

MIKKELSEN

And now you are going to meddle in matters you don't understand?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

That 's why I have brought Jacob home.

MIKKELSEN

Jacob?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Yes, none but Jacob; that much despised Jacob. For the fact of it is that he has not been wasting his year abroad as all of you think. He *has* been studying foreign conditions — not from the viewpoint of the employers, but from that of the workmen.

MIKKELSEN

Oh, I see.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

And there will be war to the hilt between those in there and us!

MIKKELSEN (*with a glance at the clock on the mantelpiece*) If only he does n't get here too late.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

He is coming! If he were not, he would have telegraphed.

[*A knock is heard at the door leading to the hall. At the sound of it, Mrs. Lynggaard is visibly startled.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Who is it?

[*In comes Mrs. Olsen. She is a shabbily dressed woman of about fifty-three, bent and worn and prematurely aged. Her glance is unsteady, and she has become accustomed to the attitude of one possessed of a standing grievance.*

MRS. OLSEN (*looking around in confusion*)

You 'll please pardon me very much, missus. I guess I got in the wrong way.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Who showed you the way, Mrs. Olsen?

MRS. OLSEN

It was the young lady. I was going to the kitchen first, as I 'm used to, and as you 've told me to, missus. And it was the young lady what took me this way herself. And seeing as my eyes has gone back on me, I thought I was all right.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Did you have anything to tell me in private, Mrs. Olsen?

MRS. OLSEN

Lord, no! But it was the young lady, missus, what said you always felt so happy when you saw me.

MIKKELSEN

Yes, you look very inspiring, Mrs. Olsen.

MRS. OLSEN (*a little oppressed by the presence of Mikkelsen*) Well, sir, it takes something wet to keep up one's courage, the way things is going. . . .

MRS. LYNGGAARD

This is Olsen's widow, father.

MIKKELSEN

I guessed that much.

MRS. OLSEN

Yes, Olsen, he came to a sad end here at the works — But of course, missus has been so extremously fine both to me and mine all the time since. So perhaps it was almost for the better it happened as it happened. But that sort of thing one does n't see until long after. And then Pastor Madsen, he 's also showed how it had to happen according to the Bible.

[*Pause.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD

All the same, I think you have something on your mind, Mrs. Olsen.

MRS. OLSEN

Well — it 's only that I expect Edward to get out tonight or in the morning.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Are you expecting your son home again?

MRS. OLSEN

Yes, time runs on. And now those years are up —

MIKKELSEN

Oh, have you also had a son abroad?

[*Mrs. Lynggaard signals to him not to ask any more questions.*

MIKKELSEN (*grasping the situation*)

Oh, I see.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

But why did n't he get out the other time you were expecting him?

MRS. OLSEN

They made it longer for him, as I am sure you remember, missus.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Well, I hope everything will turn out good and decent with him after this.

MRS. OLSEN

The Lord has kept His hand over him so far, thank heaven. — If I only had a little something to make it look pleasant like when he gets here. For, of course, one knows well enough that when the place is cold and nothing on the table, there ain't no real push to what one says about keeping straight.

MIKKELSEN

Tell me now, Mrs. Olsen, how did it really happen that your son — got on the wrong side of things?

MRS. OLSEN

I 'll tell you right away, sir. When one loses one's father, just after one 's turned thirteen, then it 's easy to know what 's going to happen. Not but that missus has looked after him something grand ever since. (*With emphasis*) But I guess that 's just what he could n't stand —

MRS. LYNGGAARD

What do you mean by that, Mrs. Olsen?

MRS. OLSEN

Well, missus, I hope you 'll please not take it badly, for of course you ain't gone and done it with any harm in mind. And, of course, you 've been extremously fine about it all the time. But I do believe as it 's you what 's spoiled him, missus.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

What are you saying? Have I spoiled your son?

MRS. OLSEN

Of course, one ought n't to say such things.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Listen now, Mrs. Olsen — I want to know all about this. Now you have to speak out.

MRS. OLSEN

Of course, one thinks of such a lot, this way and that, when things go the wrong way in life. And as I think back to when Edward was a little fellow, there was n't the least bit that was bad in him until he got to do with you, missus.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

You don't mean to say —

MRS. OLSEN

The Lord forbid! But, of course, missus, you was always so kindly minded as to give him what the young gentleman left off — both velvet clothes and jackets of wool and whole suits for a fine young gentleman — and heaven knows it was a pleasure to touch it. But for all that I don't think he should have had it.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

I thought it was the clothing that came hardest.

MRS. OLSEN

It would have been much better had you bought him something to wear. As it was, he got to look like a rich man's child what had seen better days. The other boys, they was jealous and poked fun at him, and that put all sorts of things into his head. And then, of course, missus, you was so extremously downright as to let him play with your own son, the young mister, as he grew up. And putting one thing to the other — it was more than he could stand.

MIKKELSEN

So it was hard to get him to do anything?

MRS. OLSEN

Well, his head was full of all sorts of thoughts, sir, and then he got to have feelings about things just like rich people. . . .

MRS. LYNGGAARD

But after all, Mrs. Olsen, we got him the chance to learn the trade of a painter.

MRS. OLSEN

Yes, but there 's such a lot of time without nothing to do in that trade, months at a time, and Edward

was always fired ahead of the rest. And most of the time he was going around here in the young gentleman's left-off clothes, and reading all the story-books the young gentleman was so kind as to loan him.

MIKKELSEN

What kind of books were those, Mrs. Olsen?

MRS. OLSEN

Oh, most of it was rebellimous things turned out by Russians and that sort of people. And then he was going such a lot to instructivous lecturings. And it was more than he could stand. [*Pause.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Don't you think now, Mrs. Olsen, that we might try together to make a decent and useful person out of him?

MRS. OLSEN

Yes. — If there was only a little something to make things a little pleasant like with when he 's coming home.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Oh, I am sure we can manage that.

MRS. OLSEN

And then, if you 'll please not take it badly, missus — but if the young gentleman should happen to have some old clothes lying around, for, of course, Edward ain't got nothing at all of no kind when he comes out.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

But I thought you were just saying —

MRS. OLSEN

Well, that was most when he was a little fellow, and it was velvet and such elegant stuff. And if I only don't tell where it 's come from —

MRS. LYNGGAARD

I shall see if I have anything at hand. If so, it will be sent to him.

MRS. OLSEN

Well, then I 'll say good-bye and much thanks to you. (*She seems to hesitate about leaving*)

MIKKELSEN

Good-bye, Mrs. Olsen!

[*Mrs. Lynggaard accompanies Mrs. Olsen to the door and smuggles a bill into her hand. Mrs. Olsen leaves.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*coming back into the room*)

Oh, it 's so difficult, it 's so very difficult.

MIKKELSEN

Otherwise she is rather a sensible woman, that Mrs. Olsen. And she is right!

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*pensively*)

The poor are always right —

[*Lynggaard and Heymann enter from the right.*

LYNGGAARD

Let us then say Monday at —

HEYMANN

Three-thirty.

[*Lynggaard goes across to the dining-room door, opens it, turns on the portable light and begins to study his new picture. Mrs. Lynggaard has resumed her former place at the table and is sunk in deep thought, her work lying untouched on her lap. Mikkelsen gets hold of Heymann quickly and brings him over to the left foreground.*

MIKKELSEN (*speaking in a low voice*)

Is everything in order?

HEYMANN

Next Monday at three-thirty we 'll organize the Lynggaard Distilleries, Incorporated.

MIKKELSEN

And is there nothing that might interfere?

HEYMANN

What are you having in mind?

MIKKELSEN

Jacob Lynggaard is expected home tonight. Within a few moments. He has been telegraphed for.

HEYMANN (*with a glance at Mrs. Lynggaard*)

Oh, is that so! I am very much obliged to you!

[*Heymann is starting toward Lynggaard when excited voices are heard in the hall. Mrs. Lynggaard leaps up. Estrid comes rushing in.*

ESTRID

Hooray! Do you know who 's here?

[*Jacob enters through the door that has been left open by Estrid.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Jacob!

[*Jacob runs up to his mother and embraces her.*

LYNGGAARD

What in the world —

HEYMANN (*between his teeth*)

Damn!

MIKKELSEN (*rubbing his hands contentedly*)

Higgledy-piggledy!

CURTAIN

THE SECOND ACT

The same room on the morning of the next day. The draperies in the rear are drawn apart and the doors are open, making it possible to look into the conservatory. The place is full of evergreens, creepers, etc. In the centre of it stands a basin of porphyry, with a single jet of water rising out of it. Here and there a marble statue is visible between the plants. The rays of the morning sun fall slantingly into the room.

[*The Servant opens the hall door to let in Heymann.*

HEYMANN

Will you please announce me at once.

[*The Servant bows and goes out. Heymann walks impatiently back and forth.*

LYNGGAARD (*enters from the hall dressed for horseback riding*) Good morning, my dear fellow. Anything pressing?

HEYMANN

We are going to hold the meeting today.

LYNGGAARD

What 's the meaning of that?

HEYMANN

I just had the Under-Secretary on the 'phone — he is forced to leave for London tonight — it 's impossible for him to postpone his going.

LYNGGAARD

Are we ready for it?

HEYMANN

Absolutely ready.

LYNGGAARD

But, heavens and earth, man, all the rest —

HEYMANN

I have had every one on the 'phone — all can attend at four-thirty.

LYNGGAARD

Well, let it go at that, then. Otherwise it 's strange about the Secretary — on such a short notice —

HEYMANN

There must be important reasons.

LYNGGAARD

I suppose so. And how about the strike, Heymann?

HEYMANN

There is to be a conference at my office in a few minutes.

LYNGGAARD

All right. At four-thirty, then.

HEYMANN

At four-thirty.

LYNGGAARD

All right.

[*Estrid enters from the dining-room.*

ESTRID

Good morning, father. Good morning, Mr. Heymann.

LYNGGAARD

Good morning, dear.

[*Heymann bows to Estrid.*

LYNGGAARD

Was there anything else?

HEYMANN

Not for the moment.

LYNGGAARD

I am going for a ride now, but I 'll be home again for breakfast, if there should be anything. Good morning. (*Goes out*)

HEYMANN

Good morning.

[*For a moment Heymann is watching Estrid, who has sat down at the table in the foreground and fallen to with a will on her work from the previous evening — an immense piece of knitting, with long wooden needles.*

ESTRID

Sit down, Mr. Heymann, and be entertaining.

HEYMANN

I should like nothing better — but duty is calling.

ESTRID

Same here.

HEYMANN

Woollen smocks for neglected orphans as usual?

ESTRID

Woollen smocks? No, it has come to petticoats now — woollen petticoats for neglected old hags. Thirty turns a day! Pish!

HEYMANN

I suppose it is n't wise to come near you while that 's on?

ESTRID

No, you had better look out — I hiss like a hot iron if you touch me!

HEYMANN

Good morning, and — I hope you have a good time!

[*As Heymann goes out, Jacob enters from the hall. At the sight of him Jacob starts. They exchange very formal and barely visible nods. Jacob Lynggaard is a young man of about twenty-five, whose brownish hair and beard, cut so as to make him resemble a certain modern Christ type, are his most conspicuous features. And yet there is nothing "sweet" about him. His forehead is low. His complexion is that of a man spending much of his time in the open air. His eyes have a dreamy expression. He wears a gray flannel shirt and no coat.*

JACOB

Is father in his room?

ESTRID

Good morning, Jacob. Father has just gone for a ride.

JACOB

For a ride?

ESTRID

Yes, but he 'll be home for breakfast.

JACOB

Oh.

ESTRID

Have you had a look around this morning?

JACOB (*with an expression of displeasure on his face*)

I have been over to the plant.

ESTRID

And greeted familiar faces?

JACOB

That 's why I went at least. . . .

ESTRID

You say that as if you had been disappointed.

JACOB

I went over there in the friendliest spirit.

ESTRID

And they did n't fall on your neck?

JACOB

Not exactly. Either they did n't want to recognize me, or they did n't dare — something was the matter.

ESTRID

There is mischief brewing, all right.

JACOB

What do you mean?

ESTRID

I am thinking of the strike which is in the air. They are asking for higher wages again.

JACOB

Yes, so I hear.

ESTRID

Yes, more, more, more, more — but where is it to come from, I ask. Father says that he is actually losing on the plant.

JACOB

I don't think that has to be taken literally. — Well, the relation between them and me is going to be different in the future. Perhaps it was just as well they received me as they did — to begin with. (*He walks up and down*)

ESTRID

There now! (*Being done with the amount of work prescribed for the day, she stands up and takes a good look at her brother*) But the way you look, Jacob! What has become of those embroidered waistcoats that were buttoned up to your chin? And what a beard you have grown, like a regular bogyman!

And flannel shirt! No, my boy, you looked much more *chic* before you went abroad.

JACOB

Perhaps. But the Jacob you recall was a pretty useless individual, who was n't quite at home anywhere in this world.

ESTRID

I don't know anything about that. But it seems to me you were more in style with the rooms before. Now you look like somebody who has stepped into an office on some errand and means to go out again at once. Yes, that 's how you look. — Listen, Jacob, your return should be celebrated, don't you think? Oh, you must see the new evening dress I have got. It is — well, I don't say anything more.

JACOB

I fear we shall not have much time for celebrations to begin with, Estrid. There will be more serious things to attend to. But I hope that in the future every workday will become a day of celebration.

ESTRID

That kind of thing does n't interest me, Jacob. I want some fun.

JACOB

Fun?

ESTRID

Yes — frankly speaking.

JACOB

That 's a poor thing to build your life on.

ESTRID

All right, there goes the celebration! And tomorrow you go to work in the plant?

JACOB

Today — at once. You can be sure, there is going to be a thorough cleaning-up here.

ESTRID

Is everything so old-fashioned?

JACOB

Everything must be made over. This is to be a model plant — the plant of the future.

ESTRID

What do you think father will say to that?

JACOB

Mother and I will win him over to our ideas.

ESTRID

Yes, but — Heymann?

JACOB

Heymann?

ESTRID

Is n't he to be managing director?

JACOB

Not this time, I think.

ESTRID

No? And I thought it was all settled.

JACOB

Much may happen before Monday. But for that matter, of course, Heymann is free to stay or leave in the new conditions.

ESTRID

Jacob, dear, are you not reckoning without the host? For let me tell you, it is Heymann who holds the whip in this house. And when he cracks it, then you feel as if you were in the circus, and the band plays, and the whole show begins to dance. And when Heymann *wants* to be managing director, he 'll be it.

JACOB (*startled*)

You seem to be thinking an awful lot of Heymann. One might almost believe that —

ESTRID

You have no right to believe anything at all. (*With raised forefinger as if she were talking to a dog*) Now sit — nice doggie! (*Jacob sits down*) That 's it! And let me tell you this much, my dear Jacob, that if you can get the better of Heymann, then I 'll think you a pretty big fellow.

JACOB

If he resists, he 'll have to get out.

[*Estrid puts her hand over Jacob's mouth so that his beard is hidden by it.*

JACOB (*wants to push away her hand*)

What are you up to?

ESTRID (*still covering his beard with her hand*)

Still — *couche!* Do you know, Jacob, in spite of this viking beard you have put on — you have kept your sweet, childish face and your faithful eyes.

JACOB

But don't stake too much on it.

ESTRID (*gathers up her knitting and goes out by way of the dining-room*) Good morning, Jacob!

[*Mikkelsen enters a moment later from the hall.*

MIKKELSEN

Good morning, Your Highness, good morning!

JACOB

Good morning, grandfather.

MIKKELSEN

I have just been thinking of you during my morning walk. There was something in the ideas you advanced last night that interested me a whole lot, I

tell you. If you have nothing more important to do, I should like to have a few points — suppose we sit down?

JACOB

With great pleasure. (*They sit down*)

MIKKELSEN

You see, Jacob, when a man gets as old as I am, then —

[*He is interrupted by a loud knock at the hall door. A moment later Edward Olsen enters. He is dressed in the identical outfit worn by Jacob on his return the night before. He is smooth-shaven and his hair is cropped close to the scalp. He does n't look very attractive — but perhaps this is only because one knows that he has just come out of prison. He is about 23 or 24. His manner shows a mixture of awkwardness and self-assurance, so that one might describe his chief characteristic as impudent timidity. Peculiar to him is a concave movement of the right hand, reversing the curve generally described by the hand in such a gesture. This movement he uses like a period or a dash to close an utterance. It is always accompanied by a slight bending of his head toward the left. After having entered, he remains standing for a moment at the door. He has his left glove on. The other, which is pretty badly worn, is dangling between the fingers of his right hand.*

OLSEN

Excuse my forwardness. Nobody was there to hand in my card. But if my presence is n't agreeable, I 'll —

JACOB (*goes to meet him, but not without hesitation*)

Not at all. Please come in. If I can be of any help —

OLSEN

Of help? If my visit is to be regarded in that light, then I prefer to forego the honor and to recommend myself at once —

JACOB

I 'm sorry — I did n't mean it that way.

OLSEN

Well, I wanted only to point out that I have n't come to ask anything of anybody. I came up here to greet an old friend and playmate of my childhood days. (*After a glance at Mikkelsen*) That gentleman over there — I have n't the honor.

JACOB

My grandfather, Mr. Mikkelsen. (*To Mikkelsen*) I don't know whether you are acquainted with Edward Olsen?

MIKKELSEN

Pleased to meet you. I *am* acquainted with your mother.

OLSEN (*unpleasantly impressed, but with a show of bravado*) A very respectable woman, but without any higher interests.

JACOB

Won't you sit down? I don't think my room is ready yet, or we might go up there.

OLSEN (*with a quick glance around the room*) Perhaps I don't suit the surroundings? I regret that I have to present myself in a somewhat shabby outfit — I am just back from a tour. Have n't had time to order anything new yet. (*To Mikkelsen, as he sits down*) With your permission.

MIKKELSEN

Perhaps you wish a private talk with my grandson?

OLSEN

Not at all, sir. As I have already remarked, there is nothing at all behind my visit. [*Pause.*

JACOB

We have n't seen each other for quite a long while.

OLSEN

It is n't my fault. Leaving aside certain direct — legitimate obstacles — I have done nothing to break off our relationship. I don't want to offend — but there is one thing I should like to make sure of before we go further. For I notice that it will be embarrassing, if I am to speak freely and naturally —

JACOB

What is it?

OLSEN

Are first names still in order?

JACOB

As you please, Edward.

OLSEN

All right. (*To Mikkelsen*) It 's incredible how perplexing little things like that can be.

MIKKELSEN

They can be perplexing like the dickens.

OLSEN (*to Jacob*)

Well, Jacob, as an old chum, I want first of all to wish you welcome home. I hear you have been travelling.

JACOB

I have just got back.

OLSEN

I have also been away — some time.

JACOB (*embarrassed*)

It happened before I left, you know.

OLSEN

Quite right. And, in fact, that was just what I came for. It would interest me very much to hear what you think of me on that account. I want you to speak out.

JACOB (*troubled*)

It made all of us feel very sorry at the time —

OLSEN

You may save your pity. That was n't what I came for. May I ask if you know what I was charged with?

JACOB

I know only what I read in the papers at the time or heard others say.

OLSEN

All right. (*With a glance at Mikkelsen*) You see, I am totally indifferent as to what the rabble, or the ruling mob, thinks of me. But by you, with whom I have shared like a brother all that was best in me, both as a boy and later — by you I don't want to be thought a low-down criminal. That 's the reason I came up to see you.

JACOB

You must n't believe that I have ever thought of it as anything but a youthful slip.

OLSEN

There, now — a youthful slip! It was just as well that I came. — No, Jacob, what I was charged with was the conscious deed of a mature man. That 's what I wanted you to know. — What did the papers have to say about it, anyhow? I have n't yet had time to look it up at the library. Don't be bashful, my boy, but speak plainly.

JACOB

Oh, of course, they spoke of you as —

MIKKELSEN (*enjoying each separate word*)

They spoke of you as a crook, dangerous criminal, and counterfeiter.

OLSEN

That 's what I thought. Did they print my picture?

JACOB

I don't think so.

OLSEN

Well, it does n't matter.

JACOB

But what was your idea of trying to make money in that way?

OLSEN

Gentlemen, may I ask your full attention for a moment?

MIKKELSEN

We are on tenterhooks.

OLSEN

You have heard of Spartacus, the famous leader in the war of the slaves, the first one to organize the struggle of the oppressed against the brutal power of the upper classes. You have heard of his noble struggle and tragic end, killed, as he was, by Crassus, the most bloated of all the capitalists in ancient times. Gentlemen, do you know the oath of Spartacus?

JACOB

I know the statue with that name.

OLSEN

All right. (*Jumping up and beating his breast*)

The Spartacus of our own day, that 's me, you know! Exactly — me! The goal for which I am heading has been set for me by fate itself, and I am obeying blindly. (*Placing himself in front of Jacob*) Do you think I have ever forgotten the death of my unfortunate father? Do you think I have ever forgotten the moment when they brought him home?

JACOB (*ill at ease*)

No, of course not.

OLSEN

Such a moment puts its mark on a man. Since that day I have only had one purpose in life: to avenge my father. (*With softening voice*) But the ways of fate are marvellous. It was its will that you and I should grow up together as brothers. And a good and faithful brother I have been to you. You can't say anything else, can you?

JACOB

We had a lot of fun playing together as boys.

OLSEN

And yet hatred rose up within me at times, so that I thought seriously of killing you, of choking you, of stringing you up. For it seemed to me, there could be no better way of striking at your father. And at other times it was you I hated. And then I thought of taking the life of your father. For it seemed to me there could be no sense or justice in your going about here forever without having felt what I had had to suffer. — Well, those were, after all, what I might call the innocent thoughts of a child.

MIKKELSEN

Indeed!

OLSEN

As I grew up and my vision expanded, I saw, of course, that your father was not the murderer, but that there was something referred to as "conditions." — And if I were not an atheist, I might say that the Lord should be held responsible for them on the Judgment Day.

MIKKELSEN

So you are an atheist, young man?

OLSEN

A very violent atheist. I might even be tempted into calling myself an *anti-deist*. For it would appeal to me to know that there *was* a God, and that *I* was his most important antagonist. I am a declared enemy of all authority, all religion. — But I am getting away from the conditions. That discovery took a burden off my heart. After that I could look at you, Jacob, without being constantly reminded of the fact that you were the son of a murderer. And from that moment dates the pardon of yourself and your father. I issued a pardon for both of you. — The date of it is noted in my diary of that time.

MIKKELSEN

That 's what I call magnanimity.

OLSEN

Yes, my dear sir, you laugh at it. But Spartacus did not forget his oath. He had merely come to see that the blow must be aimed at society.

JACOB

Tell me about it.

OLSEN

Well, then I went to work — (*to Mikkelsen*) for I earn my living by the toil of my hands, as the

Apostles did before me. By profession I am a painter. Well, my work brought me together with a German comrade, who had travelled a great deal and to whom I revealed my plans. He had connections all over Europe, and in that way we organized gradually an international union for the realization of my plan. At a certain date everything was to be ready, and the bomb was to explode.

MIKKELSEN

So you are an anarchist?

OLSEN

Anti-anarchist. (*To Jacob*) Did it ever occur to you what would be the result if some day we succeeded in producing gold at a cheap price?

JACOB

No, it did n't.

OLSEN

Gentlemen, try to figure out what the final results would be! Capital would simply be done for. The present social order would be dissolved by a single blow. Am I not right? No more capital; no more interest, or compound interest — all the four rules of arithmetic made superfluous!

MIKKELSEN (*with ironical gravity*)

All the four rules of arithmetic made superfluous, and also the reckoning of interest! No, young man, now you are going too far. I can stand for a lot, but to abolish, as you would, the two principal staffs on which mankind has to lean in this life — religion and arithmetic — never! I have been a teacher in both of them. Into both I have put the fairly persistent labors of a long life. My Bible commentaries were famous in their day. Mikkelsen's " Arithmetical

Primer " is still in use at the present day. And then you come here and want to tell me that all of it would be made superfluous. No, anything that can bring a man a pension of two thousand a year in his old age — that can never in all eternity become superfluous! There 's my opinion!

OLSEN

My dear sir, if you give more thought to it, you 'll have to admit that I am right. — However, in our enlightened days we have outgrown the thought of making gold. But to make paper money — that 's no trick at all.

JACOB

And yet it never succeeds.

OLSEN

Yes, I am the first one who ever succeeded in making them just as good as genuine — water mark and all. At the trial, the experts could n't tell the difference.

MIKKELSEN

But you were found out.

OLSEN

Was that my fault? There I was, hard at work, when my lamp exploded. Then some chemical preparations took fire. In a moment the whole room was in flames. I had to run. People came rushing up — and there was the whole secret, or at least enough of it to convict me. It cost me two years.

JACOB

But what was your plan?

OLSEN

At the same time, don't you know, there were scores of my fellow-conspirators at work turning out bills all over the world, pile after pile — for you must

understand that it was a question of hundreds of millions. Did it ever occur to you what a single million means?

MIKKELSEN

It does n't impress me at all, young man. To an old teacher of mathematics a couple of millions more or less cut no figure whatever.

OLSEN

The way in which they were to be circulated had also been planned — the idea was brilliant, I can tell you, positively brilliant.

JACOB

What happened to the rest?

OLSEN

Lord, man, I got out yesterday. How can I know? Perhaps they are waiting for me with the proceeds.

JACOB

But you don't mean to start again where you left off?

OLSEN

Oh, no, that plan was rotten. There is something that upsets the whole thing. A mere trifle. I have speculated until I was almost crazy, I tell you, absolutely crazy, just to get by it. But it 's entirely impossible because of that one trifling thing.

JACOB

Thank heaven!

OLSEN

But it does n't matter. I have a much better plan than that.

JACOB

Edward, is there nothing I can do for you?

OLSEN (*with pathos*)

If a son of the man who tortured the father of

Spartacus to death had come and asked him: "Is there nothing I can do for you, young man?" — what do you think Spartacus would have answered?

[*Jacobs is too embarrassed to reply.*

OLSEN

You can see for yourself, can't you. (*Now there is pride in his tone*) Jacob — I don't wish to humiliate you. A little while ago I myself held out a conciliatory hand to the world — it was misunderstood — I came just now from Heymann.

JACOB

From Heymann?

OLSEN

Yes. I looked him up at his office. It is so and so, I said. I am so and so, son of so and so. At the present time I am at work on a great plan for the improvement of the whole world. When I have put it through, money will play no part whatever, either to you or me — until that time I must be financially secure. Then I offered my services to the firm for a few hours a day at any price — I think I used the expression *à la suite.*

MIKKELSEN

And Heymann?

OLSEN

I suppose he is a very capable man within his own limited field, but as to any wider outlook — in a word, he showed me the door.

[*At that moment Estrid approaches through the conservatory, walking in a golden mist of sunlight. As she enters the room, Mikkelsen gives her a signal, and she leaves at once by way of the dining-room at the left. But Edward Olsen has caught sight of her.*

And he stands awestruck as if confronted by a vision from above.

OLSEN

Was that — was that Estrid?

JACOB

It was my sister.

[*For a moment Olsen clutches at the table as if seized with dizziness. Then he sits down in silence.*

JACOB

Are you not well?

OLSEN

It 's nothing. Perhaps it comes from my not having seen the sun shine for two years. (*He looks around*) It 's a fine place. (*Suddenly he pulls himself together and rises*) These are no proper surroundings for a man. You should get away from here and move down to me, Jacob. Then something might come out of you yet. (*With a concave movement of the hand in direction of Mikkelsen*) Sir! (*Is about to go*)

JACOB

Would it mean a lot to you to become connected with the plant?

OLSEN (*shrugging his shoulders*)

It was only a hand I held out to the world.

JACOB

You shall have that position. And you 'll hear from me very soon.

OLSEN (*once more rising to his own proper level*)

If you desire an interview, I receive at my old place. At home from ten-fifteen to eleven. (*He makes another concave gesture and leaves*)

JACOB (*coming down toward the foreground again*)

What do you say, grandfather?

MIKKELSEN

I say that his future is quite assured.

JACOB

What do you mean?

MIKKELSEN

I mean that the fellow will not be allowed to go loose very long.

JACOB

And you would calmly watch such ability going to waste?

MIKKELSEN

With perfect equanimity. Nature is rich enough without it, my boy.

JACOB

You 'll see that if his ability is turned in the right direction — you 'll see —

MIKKELSEN

I hope you won't have to regret that friendship, Jacob — he would probably be less dangerous as an enemy.

[*Estrid has been holding the dining-room door ajar and peeping in before she ventures to enter.*

JACOB

You 'll see. (*To Estrid*) Do you know where mother is?

ESTRID

Mother is upstairs.

[*Jacob goes out to the right.*

ESTRID

Tell me, grandfather, that man in here, was n't he that queer fellow Olsen, who has been in prison?

MIKKELSEN

Yes, the Lord preserve us, dear!

ESTRID

What did he want? He looked so funny.

MIKKELSEN

He came to call on Jacob.

ESTRID

Is it customary to make calls like that when you come out of prison?

MIKKELSEN

So it seems.

ESTRID (*seating herself on a low stool at the feet of Mikkelsen and looking up at him*) Does n't it make you cross at times to be so old, grandfather?

MIKKELSEN

On the contrary, I have never been more satisfied in my life.

ESTRID

It seems to me it ought to be so sad to think that everything is over.

MIKKELSEN

Nothing is over but all the bother you have had. To be old, dear, is like sitting in an easy-chair reading a good book. . . .

ESTRID

Well, that is n't much.

MIKKELSEN

But what has set you thinking of old age?

ESTRID

I 'll tell you, grandfather: just that I think life is so delightful.

MIKKELSEN

And yesterday it seemed to me you were quite dissatisfied.

ESTRID

So I was. I don't know exactly how to put it — Yes — it seems to me, life might be marvellously delightful. It is as if I could feel within myself what it might be.

MIKKELSEN (*stroking her hair*)

If you had a good friend —

ESTRID

Yes, a real good friend.

MIKKELSEN

A friend that made your heart warm —

ESTRID

Oh, grandfather, how can you say anything like that! Then I can never really talk to you again.

MIKKELSEN

Well, but now you have got Jacob home again. There is a friend for you.

ESTRID

Jacob is tedious.

MIKKELSEN

Already?

ESTRID

He has such a lot of *views*.

MIKKELSEN

Yes, and views are not entertaining.

ESTRID

I should say not! And mother is also tedious. Everything is unbearable at home.

MIKKELSEN

I fear you are very much dissatisfied with the family, Essie dear?

ESTRID

Frankly speaking, grandfather, if it were not for

you, I should n't have anybody to talk to. Mother, you know — I can never get her interested in anything that I really care for. She won't even let me have on a low-necked dress when I am going out.

MIKKELSEN

And could n't you by some wile get a low-necked dress made for yourself?

ESTRID (*with a sly smile*)

It 's done.

MIKKELSEN

Well, I had my suspicions.

ESTRID

It 's very low-necked, but frightfully sweet.

MIKKELSEN

And it 's becoming?

ESTRID

I 'm really afraid it 's a little *too* much — the last time it made Heymann behave quite —

MIKKELSEN

Heymann?

ESTRID

Yes, Mr. Heymann —

MIKKELSEN

Does he help you to put it on?

ESTRID

Now, there, grandfather — I really can't talk with you.

MIKKELSEN

I understand you perfectly, Essie dear. So you have met Mr. Heymann in company?

ESTRID

Yes; think only, I met him at the Bangs — the Coun-

cillor, you know — and he had never been there before.

MIKKELSEN

I am sure you 'll meet him again, both at that and other places.

ESTRID

But, grandfather, you 're actually pumping me! That 's not nice of you at all.

MIKKELSEN

I? Not in the least. We were only talking of your dress.

ESTRID

And then, grandfather, mother wants me to wait again in the "Good Samaritan" this winter. It opens today. And I don't want to.

MIKKELSEN

Why not?

ESTRID

It 's so tedious. They are seated at long, tedious wooden tables. And then there are young ladies out of the better families — and they go around waiting on them.

MIKKELSEN

But that 's splendid, Essie dear.

ESTRID

No, it is n't. How could it be any pleasure to serve the kind of food they are getting? It 's nothing but skim milk and bread with margarine on it. Oh, if you could only give them a real feast!

MIKKELSEN

I suppose it 's a little hard to make the guests feel as if they had had a good dinner.

ESTRID

I 'm ashamed, I tell you, when I have to go around with the tray and ask them if they want more of that fat stuff.

MIKKELSEN

Then, my dear, you have n't got the proper charitable spirit.

ESTRID

I don't know, grandfather, but all the charity in which I have taken part with mother — it has been so cautious and so shabby. I have never helped to make a single human being really happy. — But I suppose it comes from all this responsibility —

MIKKELSEN

What responsibility?

ESTRID

Don't you know that a dreadful responsibility is resting on us in this life?

MIKKELSEN

And it weighs on you?

ESTRID

Well, you see, if responsibility was something you had certain hours a day, like my knitting, and then you were done with it. But it 's always there, and it gets worse as you grow older, mother says. And that 's the reason I want to marry a man who is no longer young, when I marry.

MIKKELSEN

Now, Essie, I don't quite follow you.

ESTRID

Oh, the *young* people you meet at dances and such things, they are always talking a lot about the seriousness of life, and your mission in life, and

man and woman having to fight their way together to an understanding, and all that sort of thing. But men who are no longer quite so young — they never talk like that.

MIKKELSEN

There is something in that.

ESTRID

And don't you understand, grandfather — when I get married, then I want to have some fun. I want to have an awful lot of fun. And I don't want any responsibility. When I become engaged, I 'll demand that *he* take the entire responsibility upon himself, all through life, for all I do. I never want to hear a word about responsibility. For I have heard enough of it, both at home and between dances.

MIKKELSEN

You seem to know what you want.

ESTRID

And then I want children. I want a whole lot of cute little kids who raise a frightful racket.

MIKKELSEN

You have never taught in a school.

ESTRID (*after considering her words carefully*)

And I think they should have black hair —

MIKKELSEN (*with emphasis*)

Then you 'll have to choose a *very* dark man.

ESTRID (*jumping*)

Oh, grandfather, it 's impossible to be in the same room with you. Now I am going. I *have* gone. Good morning!

[*Estrid goes out quickly through the dining-room. At the same moment Lynggaard enters from his room.*

MIKKELSEN (*rising*)

Well, what has His Highness got to say about his son's sudden appearance on the battlefield?

LYNGGAARD

Jacob? You 'll have to pardon me, but I have had more important things to think of.

MIKKELSEN

The strike?

LYNGGAARD

That too. It is Saturday — it may come at six o'clock tonight.

MIKKELSEN

Do you really think so?

LYNGGAARD

I am afraid Heymann is too inclined to make light of it.

MIKKELSEN

Does he think the workmen will come round?

LYNGGAARD

No. But he thinks we should give in. And when Heymann talks like that, then the situation is serious.

MIKKELSEN

But if you are willing, then —

LYNGGAARD

Yes, we — but our competitors. It looks as if the Consolidated Distilleries wanted a strike. If I am not very much mistaken, there has been a lot of over-production on their part. And consequently they *could* use a strike at the present moment to hit me pretty hard — very hard, indeed — if they should care to look at the matter from a very short-sighted viewpoint.

MIKKELSEN

Is Heymann carrying on the negotiations with the Consolidated Distilleries?

LYNGGAARD

Yes.

MIKKELSEN

Hm! It 's too bad you have n't got that stock company ready yet —

LYNGGAARD (*mysteriously*)

At four-thirty this afternoon. Don't say a word about it.

MIKKELSEN

Ho-ho!

LYNGGAARD (*speaking as one of superior intelligence*)

It was the only thing left to do.

MIKKELSEN

Of course.

LYNGGAARD

And then a lucky chance would have it that we can use the Under-Secretary as an excuse — he 's going abroad tonight, don't you know?

MIKKELSEN

I see. So I suppose you have been pretty busy this morning —

LYNGGAARD

Heymann has looked after it.

MIKKELSEN

I *quite* see.

LYNGGAARD

Sh — there 's Harriet now!

[*Mrs. Lynggaard comes from her own room. In comparison with the day before, she looks excited and happy.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Good morning, father. Have you been out for a walk already?

MIKKELSEN

Not yet, my dear. (*Happy at the chance of getting away*) But now I am going to take advantage of the fine weather. I 'll see you both later. (*Goes out to the right*)

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Have you given any thought to the fact that Jacob is with us again?

LYNGGAARD

I should prefer that he had n't come.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

It is easy to hear that you have n't had a real talk with him yet.

LYNGGAARD

I had enough of him last night, Harriet. I think he is worse than he was before. Now he has a lot of social views to air besides. We were spared that much, at least, before he went abroad.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

But don't you see the change that has taken place in him? Don't you see that this one year has made a man of him?

LYNGGAARD

I see that he has grown a beard.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

It means, then, that you don't want to see.

LYNGGAARD

The first and foremost thing you can expect of a grown-up man is that he is capable of seeing a

certain coherence in life, or evolution, or whatever you please to call it. But Jacob cannot see any coherence in anything. He is regarding the world as a pure — how shall I put it? — as a purely mechanical mixture of isolated and accidental irrationalities.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Perhaps he sees a coherence where you cannot see it at all.

LYNGGAARD

Why, he 's like a regular infant having had no experience whatever. All that he was roaring about last night — well, I never heard of anything so beyond all sense of responsibility or purpose! A couple of times it gave me a real uncanny sensation. Pure anarchism! It would n't surprise me the least, if some fine day he began to bombard society with dynamite and was blown up by it himself.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

The responsibility for Jacob's future will fall on you, Peter. If you turn him away now, when he has come home more desirous of doing something than he was ever before — then you 'll have to bear the consequences yourself.

LYNGGAARD (*after a pause*)

There is something that has been troubling me, Harriet. It has been troubling me ever since yesterday. . . . Was it you that sent for Jacob?

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*after a brief hesitation*)

Yes.

LYNGGAARD (*looking at her dejectedly*)

It seemed to me that my suspicion was mean — but then I was right after all.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

I wanted to give you a final chance to think the matter over before it was too late.

LYNGGAARD

Oh, that 's it!

[*A moment of painful silence follows. Lynggaard walks back and forth. Jacob enters from the hall.*

JACOB

Good morning, father!

[*Lynggaard continues to walk as before without answering. Jacob and Mrs. Lynggaard exchange glances.*

LYNGGAARD

It is just as well that we get through with this at once, Jacob. . . . What was the reason for this headlong home-coming of yours?

JACOB

Oh — principally it was a single word in mother's latest letter that decided me.

LYNGGAARD

What word was that, if I may ask?

JACOB

If you 'll have a little patience with me, I shall try to explain myself as well as I can.

LYNGGAARD (*sitting down*)

I am at your service.

JACOB (*also seating himself*) First of all I want to tell you then, father, that I am really thankful to you for sending me out of the country. You cannot imagine how this year has stirred me up. You can see it, can't you, both of you? (*His glance toward his father meets with no response*)

MRS. LYNGGAARD

I saw it at once, Jacob, the moment you got in yesterday.

JACOB

I used to feel so depressed here at home. I found life hopeless in every direction. I saw nothing around me that I could joyfully take hold of. I don't know — but it seemed to me that the time in which we were living — this much-praised century of technical achievement — was pretty rotten. And to cap the climax, I was sent out myself to fill my head with all that technical stuff. And so I tried to do, too, honestly and earnestly.

LYNGGAARD

That 's more than I expected of you.

JACOB

Until one day I realized that it was a very subordinate matter.

LYNGGAARD

A subordinate matter?

JACOB

Yes. But I had reached the verge of despair before that became clear to me. . . . I shall never forget the impressions I received while looking out of the car window on my way through Western Prussia and Belgium, and, coming home, through Saxony. Well, once upon a time you made that trip yourself, father —

LYNGGAARD

A magnificent trip!

JACOB

I should think that your sense of beauty, at least, ought to have shrunk from the forest of chimneys and all those factory horrors —

LYNGGAARD

The more chimneys, the greater prosperity.

JACOB

Well, the effect on me was quite different. I assure you, it was as if my heart had been withered by what I saw. (*Warming up as he talks on*) In endless series they rushed by me, those smoke-filled hells from which hope has been excluded. They are never reached by the rays of the sun — which are kept out by us. Pale as a moon hangs the sun in the sky — you can look at it with unprotected eyes. Steel wires are strung above the streets, and along the wires coal scuttles glide incessantly back and forth through the air. I think I 'd rather sit in a prison cell all my life, staring at a bare wall, than have to look at such horrors day in and day out. There is especially one picture that has eaten itself ineradicably into my retina — for it was repeated hundreds of times. First a small forest comes sweeping by, and hidden within it — so that the workmen may not see the splendors, and so that the others may not be bothered by the horrors — lies a palace, with a park and a lake, with swans and bathing place: that 's the residence of the factory owner. Then come the factories with their flaming gullets, their smoke-belching chimneys, and their railroad trains — all of it electrically lighted night and day. And close to all this lie the homes of the workmen.

LYNGGAARD

Yes, of course; how could it be otherwise?

JACOB

I speak of it as the homes of the workmen. But do you know what such a home implies down there?

It is the tiniest thing I have seen in the whole world. For it is nothing but a window shade, behind which they have a chance to multiply.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

That is frightful!

LYNGGAARD

Well, they are a lot better off around here.

JACOB

In the midst of such a cluster of sheds occupied by the workmen lies the church. In the course of a few hours, don't you know, hundreds of such churches pass by. And they look as if they had come from the same factory every one, made to order and ready for immediate use. They almost gave me the impression of being made out of corrugated iron.

LYNGGAARD

Yes, they don't compare with my church.

JACOB

And if for a moment a piece of open country appears, it is overrun with soldiers at drill. They are training guns or practising at rifle ranges — for if some day it should become necessary — don't you see. . . . Throughout the six days of the week the military form a cordon around the city, but on the seventh the minister stands up in the midst of it to preach the spirit of obedience to authority.

LYNGGAARD

Which seems to be well needed.

JACOB

And then to think that in such darksome and horror-filled corners of the world, into which the sun can never reach; where the air, night and day, is filled with coal dust and fog and stink; where bayonets

form palisades around them — there millions of people have to live and die — people like you and me — people whose lives are worn out by toil and care, and who never, never may catch, or even imagine, a single glimpse of the world's beauty.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Terrible!

JACOB

All the time I was there, I felt like choking. . . . It was worst of all at Birnbach, a little factory town buried a yard deep in dirt at the bottom of a kettle-shaped valley.

LYNGGAARD

Birnbach! The factories there are regular monsters — they are using up the water power to the very last drop.

JACOB

It was there it occurred to me one evening to attend a meeting of workmen. And there I got a first glimmer of understanding —

LYNGGAARD

Understanding of what?

JACOB

Of how those people endure life.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

How can they?

JACOB

What supports them, so that they don't take their own lives or rebel singly and to no use — it is that they form part of a movement, part of the great movement of the time itself. All of a sudden I understood this. And a sadness took hold of me. For at that moment I understood also that I had been

born into a time that has no use for me. And so I ran away from the whole thing, for I could not see what to do about it.

LYNGGAARD

Well, and then you went to Italy?

JACOB

Yes. But I could n't get rid of the impression made on me by that labor meeting at Birnbach. I could n't. In the midst of my efforts to enjoy some splendid palace, or an old church, or a courthouse, there it was again! I could take no joy in their beauty because of the thought of what had been paid for the building of them — in the form of injustice and abuse of human beings.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

I understand, Jacob.

JACOB

And for that reason it seemed to me at times that I was unfitted for this world. Had I been a Catholic — then I think I should have entered a monastery.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

But then the change came, did n't it?

JACOB

Of course, after all it was not without its influence to be going around there among the memories of great days that have passed. I used to wish myself back to those days. I used to wish that I had been living in the days of the Renaissance, at the time of the early Christians, during the Revolution at Paris, and always it seemed to me that the time in which I had to live was miserable. One evening, as I was sitting in the Colosseum with a couple of countrymen, I explained all this to them. And then one of

them said: "That 's all right, but suppose now that you, with your education and social position, had been living at Rome in the days of Nero, and that, on some occasion, you had come to hear one of Paul's sermons — don't you think it probable that you would have gone away in total indifference, without the least sense of having heard anything in particular? Those that are always full of enthusiasm for the great days that have passed," he said, "those are not the ones that could ever experience such days." . . . That struck me. Once more I saw before me that labor meeting at Birnbach. On that evening I had not known the time of my visitation. But now it became all of a sudden clear to me — in a flash — that the time in which I am living is a great one, and that the movement going on around us is the greatest movement ever known in history. (*He rises and begins to walk to and fro*)

LYNGGAARD

And now you want to become a labor leader for a change?

JACOB (*stopping*)

From that moment I consecrated my life to the solution of the greatest problem that has ever confronted humanity. [*Pause.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD

This is what I have been dreaming —

JACOB

And yet I should probably not have come home at this time — for there is so much that has to be studied, and thought out, and laid a basis for, don't you know. It was so delightful to be all by myself down there, deep in my books and my studies, with my

eye fixed on a clear, tangible goal — I who had never known what it was to take pleasure in my work! But then came mother's letter, and when I read the word *company* in it, then —

LYNGGAARD

Well, what then?

JACOB

Then I closed my books at once and started home. For there is one thing I have learned during my visits to the factory towns of other countries: no matter how badly off the workmen may be in places run by a private owner in person; no matter how far he goes in his exploitation of them — there is nevertheless always something left of a human relationship between him and his subordinates. But wherever a place is run by a company, there the workmen are a thousand times worse off. The stock company — it is our own day's most devilish invention; it knows of no considerations or scruples in any direction; it is an infernal machine pure and simple — that 's what it is! When I read that word *company*, then I felt that I *had* to get home. (*Sits down*)

LYNGGAARD

And may I ask what you have in mind to do on that account?

JACOB

Only one thing, father. To persuade you into letting everything remain as before, while — until —

LYNGGAARD

Until what?

JACOB

Till we have time, I mean, to talk over the details

of how to run the plant so that, some time in the future, it may be regarded as a model from a humanitarian viewpoint.

LYNGGAARD

There is plenty of time for that, my boy — let us only get at your plans for the future at once.

JACOB

Oh, such a thing can't be done on the spot —

LYNGGAARD (*tauntingly*)

Perhaps you have n't got that far in your books?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

But Jacob must have time for it, Peter.

LYNGGAARD

I am afraid the wait will be too long for us.

JACOB

All I hoped was that we might leave everything as it used to be until I could think out the new methods that are to be tried. When those methods had stood the test, then there would be quite a different chance for me to step forward as one speaking with authority.

LYNGGAARD

Step forward — where do *you* intend to step forward?

JACOB

I am speaking of my future aims, of my work on behalf of the great movement of the time.

LYNGGAARD (*rising after a glance at his watch*)

Now I have a proposition to make to you, Jacob. I and Heymann will see that the methods of this plant become as devilishly mean as we possibly can make them. We can promise you to surpass even those monster institutions at Birnbach — so after

this you won't need to go abroad in order to study methods of exploitation at first hand. All you have to do is to arrange a study and watchtower for yourself in your old room. As before, you will get everything free in this house until you think you can support yourself as a labor leader. I believe that 's the arrangement which will suit all of us best. — And now you will have to pardon me. I am afraid Heymann is already waiting for me. (*Starts to leave*)

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*rising*)

Peter! This goes too far. I suppose that Jacob still counts for a little more than Heymann in this house —

JACOB (*rising*)

Well, father, when you take it like that, then I have to act accordingly. Your offer of free support I prefer not to accept. The thought of what I have cost this house already is weighing heavily on me, considering where the money has come from.

LYNGGAARD

And yet you have condescended heretofore —

JACOB

I hope that my future will expiate the sin that taints the money of this house.

LYNGGAARD (*enraged*)

May I ask what you mean — or what you take me for? A usurer, or a thief?

JACOB

I have used no such words.

LYNGGAARD

What the devil are those scruples that you make such a show of? What is there in my relations to

my workmen that you can find fault with? Am I not paying maximum wages?

JACOB

I suppose you pay just as much as you have to.

LYNGGAARD

Have I not built decent, wholesome houses for my workmen?

JACOB

For which they have to pay a proper consideration.

LYNGGAARD

Have I not built a school which their children can attend free of charge?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

In order that the right kind of views may be hammered into them while they are young enough.

LYNGGAARD

They are learning what they ought to learn, and what will do them most good. Have I not built a church for them? Am I not paying a minister out of my own pocket?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

And you revise his sermons without extra charge.

JACOB

I think the rents paid by the workmen more than cover the salaries you give to the minister and the teacher.

LYNGGAARD

May I ask if both of you are clean out of your heads? On my soul, one might think that you were not quite sane! One might think —

SERVANT (*enters*)

Mr. Heymann is waiting in your room, sir.

LYNGGAARD (*controlling himself while the Servant is in*

the room) All right. Ask him to excuse me for a moment. I 'll be there at once. (*The Servant goes out*) Well, now I have spent a good half-hour listening to your interesting expositions, Jacob, and I have not yet been able to discover what is your plan. For heaven's sake, man, you must have some kind of plan. Do you know it yourself, or don't you?

JACOB

I should have liked to prepare you for it by degrees instead of blurting it out all at once.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

You ought to understand, Peter, what this means to Jacob.

LYNGGAARD

Let me have it, Jacob. Let me have it right in the face. I am ready for the worst.

[*Jacob remains silent.*

LYNGGAARD

There you see — you are not sure yourself! — Listen then to one more word before we close the discussion of this matter. Bear in mind for once what the Lynggaard Distilleries have meant not only to our own family, but in the history of this country. They were established by your great-grandfather, Peter Jacob Lynggaard, who began as a young man in a miserable backyard in the old part of the city, with a single workman and a small boy to help him. Since that day, which should be treasured by you, as it is by me, as the most noteworthy day in the annals of our family — since that day three generations of us have labored unceasingly for the advancement of the business, so that today the plant is regarded as a model and an ornament to the country. Since that

day the Lynggaard Distilleries have advanced unceasingly, and never — not even during the most serious crises — have they taken a single step backward. And why? Because we have always moved ahead with the time. And when now, after careful and mature consideration, we are changing the whole manner of conducting the business, then we are once more proving the strength of our vitality by moving with the time. And when, within a very short time, I shall take this significant step and thus conclude the transition to a new time that sees in the stock company the most effective form of organization for a great industry, I shall also be fully conscious of my responsibilities, while at the same time I shall feel that I am acting in accordance with the spirit of my ancestors. — And now, Jacob, I ask you, as the future heir to the Lynggaard name and the Lynggaard traditions, to answer me frankly and honestly: What would you do if, at this moment, the business were your own?

JACOB

Then I should present it to the workmen's organization.

LYNGGAARD

Oh, that 's what you would do, my little Jacob! Well, that was all I wanted to know. It 's time, then, that we get Heymann placed at the head of it. (*He intends to leave*)

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*stepping in front of him*)

Peter!

LYNGGAARD

If you stand on your heads, it will nevertheless be as I have said. The company *is* formed. The formal

organization takes place at four-thirty this afternoon.

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*as if paralyzed*)
What are you saying?

JACOB
This afternoon?

LYNGGAARD
Yes.

MRS. LYNGGAARD
When — was that decided?

LYNGGAARD
This morning.

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*with sudden light on what has been happening*) I see.

JACOB
Before you go, father, listen to a final word. I have come here to take up the fight against the world's injustice, and that fight is life to me. I have no power to force my views upon you, and you have no power to force yours on me, but you must know this much: that from the moment you make Heymann managing director, I am no longer your son — then you have once for all chosen between him and me.

LYNGGAARD
As you please. But there is one thing that you should know: I 'll rather go childless into my grave than witness the destruction of the business inherited from my ancestors. (*He goes quickly into his own room*)

JACOB (*for a moment he stands as if lost; then he sits down at the table, his eyes fixed in a hopeless stare; finally he rises again, looks around and says with*

deep feeling) Well, then there is nothing left for me to do here —

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Jacob — go up to your room and pack your trunk. Get ready to leave at once.

[*Jacob looks at her without comprehension of her meaning.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD

It 's now *my* turn to give your father his choice.

CURTAIN

THE THIRD ACT

The same room about three o'clock.

Mikkelsen is seated in one of the easy-chairs, reading a newspaper.

The door to the hall is opened and Edward Olsen is admitted by the Servant, who withdraws again on seeing Mikkelsen.

OLSEN (*who remains standing in the background*)

Excuse me —

MIKKELSEN (*rising*)

Not at all. I am extremely delighted to see you again. Will you please come nearer?

OLSEN

It was really Jacob to whom I wished to speak a few words.

MIKKELSEN

I don't think he is at home. But won't you sit down? Perhaps I can —

OLSEN (*seating himself*)

Thanks. Just for a moment.

MIKKELSEN (*who has also sat down*)

Perhaps I might take a message for you?

OLSEN

As you please. Hm — Perhaps you recall our consultation this morning, Mr. Mikkelsen, and that Jacob offered me a more important position at the works?

MIKKELSEN

I remember that there was some talk about a small job, but I don't think it has materialized yet.

OLSEN

Well — I have come to resign my position.

MIKKELSEN

Already?

OLSEN

I renounce it.

MIKKELSEN

Perhaps you prefer your former profession?

OLSEN

Far from it, my dear sir.

MIKKELSEN

Oh, you don't?

OLSEN

If you were familiar with my viewpoint, you would know that I am absolutely opposed to all one-sided trade specialization. It smothers — according to my own experience — the universally human in us. A steady position — no matter how good — you are tied by it. I shall have no time left.

MIKKELSEN

What are you having in mind, Mr. Olsen? — You must do something to live.

OLSEN

Your remark is perfectly correct. Well, for the present — this winter, at least — I intend to get through as unemployed.

MIKKELSEN

As unemployed! Well, I have heard of all sorts of occupations in my life, but —

OLSEN

For I must say that it has pleased me extremely to watch the interest with which our time is embracing the unemployed. This is a matter that has come very much to the front during the few years I have been away. I don't know, Mr. Mikkelsen, whether you keep track of all the latest movements of our time —

MIKKELSEN

Oh, yes. In a way.

OLSEN

I bought a paper (*taking out a newspaper from one of his inside pockets*) and I must say that if, in these days, you want to keep up with your position as unemployed, then it is quite out of the question to undertake anything else. This is only for today, Saturday. (*Looking for something in the paper*) Here it is. Do you want to hear? "At 3 P. M. — Lecture for the unemployed. In the big auditorium of the Music Palace. Mr. Vestergaard of the Royal Theatre will read Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Mendelssohn's music will be rendered by members of the Royal Orchestra. At 4 P. M. — For the unemployed. Lecture with stereopticon slides by Professor E. Petersen: The Digestive Apparatus of — " (*he has to turn the page*)

MIKKELSEN

— of the unemployed.

OLSEN

" — of Man. At 5 P. M. — Opening of the Good Samaritan. The unemployed will be welcomed by Mr. Borch, member of the Stock Exchange, and Mrs. Blad (wife of Admiral Blad). An address of thanks

on behalf of those present will be delivered by Mr. Henriksen, a workman of many years' unemployment who holds the record as guest of the Samaritan. Music has been promised by the band of the Royal Guards. At 7 P. M. — For the unemployed. The Dark Side of Modern Society will be explained by Aaron Hansen, B.S. At 8 P. M. — Free dancing classes for the unemployed," etc., etc.

MIKKELSEN

I must say that the programme is laid out with a great deal of care.

OLSEN

But it makes the day slip by, does n't it?

MIKKELSEN

Yes, Olsen, you 're certainly exposed to a great deal of strain. As far as I can see, it will be necessary in the end to establish a Recreation Home for the Overworked Unemployed.

OLSEN (*pocketing the newspaper as he rises*)

Pardon me for breaking away, but I should like to take in the overture to the *Midsummer Night's Dream.*

MIKKELSEN (*rising, too*)

Don't let me detain you, Mr. Olsen. (*As he is about to escort Olsen to the door*) Oh, that 's right, while I remember it. You seemed to be very much interested in that fellow — Spartacus?

OLSEN

I am thinking of him all the time.

MIKKELSEN

Are you familiar with the latest conclusions arrived at by science in regard to this matter?

OLSEN

Unfortunately I have not had the chance to keep myself posted during the last couple of years.

MIKKELSEN

It 's rather funny, I must say. For it has become possible to prove that Spartacus was not at all a son of the man whom he thought his father, and by whose dead body he took his famous oath.

OLSEN (*as if overcome*)

What is that you say?

MIKKELSEN

Don't you think there is something tragic about the way in which he — moved by a wholly false supposition — went and wasted his powers and his life on a hopeless cause?

OLSEN

Why did you tell me that? Just now, when I was in such need of an exalted model. Just now, when I was seeing the goal so clearly ahead of me.

MIKKELSEN

To me it seems quite exciting to imagine what might have become of Spartacus — of a man with his ability — if one of those who knew about it had told him in time.

OLSEN

And he was the son of — whom?

MIKKELSEN (*with emphasis*)

He was the son of a *very* noble Roman. (*Looks searchingly at Olsen*)

OLSEN

You are hiding something from me —

MIKKELSEN (*shrugging his shoulders*)

I don't know more than what I have read.

OLSEN (*squeezing his gloves as if he meant to crush them*) Good-bye, sir — and thank you for your information! (*He goes out*)

[*Mikkelsen remains standing in the same spot in evident enjoyment of the effect produced by his words.*

LYNGGAARD (*entering from his room*)

So you are home at last — thank heaven! I have been looking for you.

MIKKELSEN

You look quite upset, my dear boy. What is the matter?

LYNGGAARD

Don't ask *me*.

MIKKELSEN

Upstairs they are slamming the doors and pulling trunks about as if they meant to break everything to pieces.

LYNGGAARD

The place has become a madhouse since yesterday.

MIKKELSEN

Is anything the matter with Jacob?

LYNGGAARD

Oh, you 'll think me a liar when I tell you. Harriet and Jacob, my wife and my own son — why, upon my soul it does sound like sheer insanity — they have been in secret correspondence with each other all the time while we were preparing to organize the company — they have formed a regular conspiracy against me. And then, when Harriet noticed that the thing was coming to a head, she wrote or telegraphed for Jacob in order to have him here at the crucial moment. What do you say to that? And the fellow comes flying in here as if shot out of a

gun, and filled full of all sorts of undigested reformatory ideas — well, you heard him last night, did n't you? And he wants to stop the organization of the company and turn the business into some kind of socialistic coöperative venture. A couple of hours ago they arranged a regular family council. Jacob made a lot of noise, and he was backed by Harriet, who was just spitting and hissing with her old hatred toward Heymann. Great family upheaval! And then I told Jacob in a decent way to go to hell.

MIKKELSEN

Maybe that 's what they are making preparations for upstairs.

LYNGGAARD

And do you know what happened next? Harriet became positively hysterical, and this is what it ended up in: that if the company is organized this afternoon according to schedule, then Harriet will leave on the night express, together with Jacob. She is, in all seriousness, going away from house and home.

MIKKELSEN

For how long?

LYNGGAARD

For how long? Forever. That is to say, until Heymann is driven out of the business. In other words, on her part it amounts to actual separation.

MIKKELSEN

So that 's what was coming. Well, I declare! — In other words, you are given the choice between your wife and Heymann.

LYNGGAARD

Yes. It sounds like insanity, does n't it? But seriously speaking, what do you think I should do? At

this particular moment, when my mind is full of a thousand other things — strikes, and the selling of stock, and so on — That 's what I wanted to ask you about. Do you think *you* can talk some reason into her?

MIKKELSEN

No, that 's something I have given up trying long ago.

LYNGGAARD

Of course, as her husband I must have some means of controlling her. I am not familiar with the law, in its details, but I feel sure I can simply demand that she stay here.

MIKKELSEN

You should n't do that.

LYNGGAARD

But what do you want me to do?

MIKKELSEN

Let her go, my dear fellow.

LYNGGAARD

Are you talking seriously?

MIKKELSEN

I am.

LYNGGAARD

So you advise a separation — you, her own father?

MIKKELSEN

For the moment, yes. I must tell you quite frankly, that even if you succeed in preventing her from going away, you 'll have a perfect hell in the future. Believe me, for what I say is based on the marital experience of a long life. When your wife develops sudden notions, you must submit *at once*. If such a notion is promptly satisfied, there is nothing fur-

ther to it. For that reason I tell you: let her leave! And rather today than tomorrow. (*After a brief pause*) There is only one other thing I should advise.

LYNGGAARD

And that is?

MIKKELSEN

Let Estrid go with her.

LYNGGAARD

Estrid?

MIKKELSEN

Yes.

LYNGGAARD

But why?

MIKKELSEN

Estrid is a sensible girl. You have to explain to her that her mother is ill, and so on. She must go along.

LYNGGAARD

But if they don't want to take her along?

MIKKELSEN

She *must* go. Once she is on the train, I guess they won't put her off along the road.

LYNGGAARD

But I don't see what I gain by it.

MIKKELSEN

What you gain is that the whole thing gets a perfectly natural and innocent appearance. Mrs. Lynggaard with son and daughter go to the South for the Winter. You will join them when the business permits you, and so on. And in that case I think it would be very strange if the whole matter did n't get smoothed out.

LYNGGAARD

You think so?

MIKKELSEN

Can you tell me what Harriet is to occupy herself with in the long run down there? Where is she to find her daily portion of worry? And as to Jacob — let him grow a few years older, and you will behold wonders. I have never yet, among grown-up men of the property-holding class, found any philosophy but that which asserts the validity of capital. And I should be very much mistaken if Jacob did n't some time find his peace in a gentle, progressive, safe and sane, socio-radical moderation. . . . Do as I say. Let it blow over.

LYNGGAARD

You have really taken a weight from my heart. I think you are right. I 'll go up and talk to Estrid at once.

[*Lynggaard goes out through the dining-room. Mikkelsen rubs his hands in glee at the good advice he has given. A moment later the Servant enters from Lynggaard's room.*

MIKKELSEN

Are you looking for my son-in-law?

SERVANT

Mr. Heymann wants to speak to Mr. Lynggaard.

MIKKELSEN

Please show Mr. Heymann in here.

[*The Servant goes out to the right. Shortly afterward Heymann enters from Lynggaard's room. He carries a portfolio under his arm.*

MIKKELSEN

How are you, my dear fellow? (*Heymann returns*

his salute) My son-in-law will be here in a moment. Won't you sit down and wait? (*They seat themselves; then Mikkelsen says slyly*) Why, the Under-Secretary came very near putting us in a hole —

HEYMANN (*answering in the same tone*)

It almost looked like it this morning —

MIKKELSEN

Well, things of that kind will happen. But now the company is as good as an accomplished fact, is n't it?

HEYMANN

Practically.

MIKKELSEN

So there is still something lacking?

HEYMANN

We have still to have this protocol signed. They will be here in an hour (*with a faint smile*): the Under-Secretary, Councillor Bang, the bankers Levison and Meyer, the lawyers, and a few others. Then we 'll sign. At six it will be announced to the heads of our departments — and that means the matter is finished.

MIKKELSEN

Are you quite sure now, Heymann, that nothing can interfere?

HEYMANN

It sounds almost as if you had something in mind.

MIKKELSEN

In your place I should n't feel quite so confident.

HEYMANN (*becoming serious*)

You mean that —?

MIKKELSEN

In all such matters it seems to me that you can never

feel quite secure until the signatures have had time to dry.

HEYMANN

Now you are a little too pessimistic, I think. Barring earthquakes and other natural phenomena that cannot be foreseen —

MIKKELSEN

Earthquakes, you said. "Earthquake" is good. That 's exactly what the house barometer is indicating just now.

HEYMANN (*growing serious again*)

Is anything brewing?

MIKKELSEN (*after a cautious glance around the room*)

I am your friend, Heymann, and I am also a friend of the house, and I believe it is to the advantage of both parties that I acquaint you with the conditions prevailing here just now. These are the facts. Jacob has returned, as I thought, for the exclusive purpose of preventing the organization of the company. He has become a socialist, and he wants to have the business run in a socialistic spirit, and he has the support of my daughter, who — has a fondness for that kind of ideas. Just now those two are staking everything to put their campaign through, and they have a whole hour left to labor with Lynggaard.

HEYMANN

Is that so?

MIKKELSEN

Well, what do you say now?

HEYMANN

Oh, it 's lucky that Lynggaard knows how we are situated. He realizes just as well as I do, that the thing is practically inevitable.

MIKKELSEN

Perhaps that 's so, my dear Heymann. But there is something else you should know. The moment the company is formed and you are made managing director, my daughter will leave this house and her home forever. You can see that the matter has been carried to extremes — for it means a separation.

HEYMANN (*startled*)

Separation! Well, you must pardon my question, but do you think your daughter quite responsible in this matter?

MIKKELSEN

That 's a question I can't undertake to answer, but she has plenty of will power — having got it from me. At this moment Lynggaard has to choose between his wife and you. What do you say to that?

HEYMANN

All I can say is that I hope, both for his own sake and for the sake of the business, that Lynggaard does n't lose his nerve at the crucial moment.

MIKKELSEN

That 's very nice of you, Heymann. But as far as you are concerned, you don't care in the least?

HEYMANN

I would n't say that. As long as I am connected with the business here, I am, of course, interested in its continuation and advancement. But in regard to this matter I cannot do anything beyond what I have done. I have no right to meddle in family affairs, and shall have no reason to do so. But this much is clear: if the company does not materialize, and if the intention is that Mrs. Lynggaard and Jacob are to conduct the business hereafter, then it

is out of the question for me to let my future be tied up with it in any way. I shall then resign at once.

MIKKELSEN

All right. But personally you would prefer that the company was formed?

HEYMANN

Yes.

MIKKELSEN

That 's also what I supposed. And when Lynggaard consulted me a moment ago, I advised him calmly to let his wife take her departure. Well, perhaps you consider that a strange piece of advice, considering that Mrs. Lynggaard is my only daughter. . . .

HEYMANN

I think your advice very sensible in every respect.

MIKKELSEN

I must say, you are not troubled by any sentimentalism.

HEYMANN

To be so would not be wise. For I have to tell you quite candidly, that the decision to be made means a whole lot more to Lynggaard than to me. To the business it means life or death — and that 's as plain as I can put it.

MIKKELSEN

Oh, is that the state of affairs? But do you really think that you have made the *entire* bearing and scope of the situation sufficiently clear to my son-in-law?

HEYMANN (*cautiously*)

What do you mean by the *entire* scope of the situation?

MIKKELSEN

I mean simply — so completely that he understands it.

HEYMANN

I have made it as clear as I could. Of course, I have been more careful and considerate in my expressions than I am to you now — but the figures that accompanied my reports were not to be misunderstood.

MIKKELSEN

Then we 'll have to rely on the force of those figures.

HEYMANN

But how strongly Lynggaard may cling to his principles at the critical moment — that 's quite another question.

MIKKELSEN (*craftily*)

If I know you at all, Heymann, you have got a final trump of some kind up your sleeve for an emergency.

HEYMANN

I cannot quite make out what you have in mind, Mr. Mikkelsen.

MIKKELSEN

Nothing definite — I am merely thinking of some sort of bond that would form a close tie between Lynggaard and yourself.

HEYMANN

I have nothing but the rational arguments — very good ones, too — which I have been using all the time.

MIKKELSEN

Rational arguments? — Rational arguments don't count for much in this world, Heymann. A single hypnotist can do more with a brass button on which

he lets the light play, than ten philosophers with their rational arguments.

HEYMANN

That trump to which you referred — of what nature could it be?

MIKKELSEN

Now, for instance, during the transactions of this afternoon — of course, without resorting to any excessive capitalization could n't one-half of a million, or some such little sum, be left free?

HEYMANN

One-half of a million! Why, it 's rather late in the day. And what good would it do anyhow?

MIKKELSEN

It might be turned into just such a brass button for Lynggaard to gaze at until the trance comes.

HEYMANN

Are you thinking of some additional art acquisitions.

MIKKELSEN

I am thinking of a gallery, my dear fellow, with the name of Lynggaard in gilt letters above the entrance.

HEYMANN (*with a subtle smile*)

Unfortunately I have to use that trump — further on in the game.

MIKKELSEN

You have my respect, Heymann. Your plans are becoming a little too vast for me. I can see that you have outgrown not only my small primer in arithmetic, but the "larger course" too.

HEYMANN

Perhaps. And I don't doubt that I 'll get the company organized. But there is another feature of the matter that I don't see what to do about. For if I

put through what I want, the situation afterward will become just as unpleasant on account of these domestic disturbances.

MIKKELSEN

Well, I thought of that, too. It may easily become very annoying to Heymann, I thought. And for that reason I gave my son-in-law another piece of advice.

HEYMANN

And that was?

MIKKELSEN

That when his wife and Jacob leave the house, he should let Estrid go with them — in order to preserve the appearance of domestic harmony.

HEYMANN (*smiling*)

I think I still have something to learn from my old teacher. — But do you also expect the young lady to be willing?

MIKKELSEN

If nothing else will help, I hope *you* will know how to make her see what a tremendous lot is at stake here.

[*Estrid comes rushing in from the hall.*

ESTRID (*beside herself and speaking while still in the doorway*) Oh, grandfather, I want you to help me!

MIKKELSEN (*rising quickly and going to meet her*)

But what is the matter, my dear?

ESTRID

Father wants me to go away this evening with mother and Jacob, and I don't want to. I don't want to, I tell you. There is something behind it that I am not to know. *I don't want to!* (*She stops suddenly as she catches sight of Heymann, who has also risen*)

MIKKELSEN

I fear you 'll have to do it just the same, Estrid dear.

ESTRID

But what in the world is going on here?

MIKKELSEN

I think Mr. Heymann can explain that much better than I. Pardon me a moment. — I 'll be right back. (*He goes cut to the right*)

ESTRID (*looking at Heymann*)

Yes, there you are — eavesdropping!

HEYMANN

Well, how could I help it, considering the way you have of taking people unawares? (*In a lower voice*) But if you only knew how becoming it was to you to come flying in like that, you would n't be looking as angry as you are now.

ESTRID (*trying to be conventionally polite*)

Won't you be seated, Mr. Heymann? I think my father will be here in a moment.

HEYMANN (*in the same tone, but with a suggestion of a smile*) Thank you, Miss Lynggaard, the honor is almost more than I can accept.

[*They sit down. Pause.*

ESTRID

It looks as if we were going to have a beautiful Fall —

HEYMANN

Uncommonly beautiful. I don't know, Miss Lynggaard, if you study the reports of the Meteorological Institute — the barometer is high all over Europe —

ESTRID

I am very much interested in the metro — metro —

HEYMANN

Meteorological — Yes, the word is a little hard.

ESTRID

I know perfectly how to spell it, Mr. Heymann.

[*Pause.*

HEYMANN (*looking at his watch*)

Your father does n't seem to be coming. I am sorry, but I have to interrupt our pleasant conversation. (*Rising*) I wish you a happy journey, Miss Lynggaard.

ESTRID (*her voice trembling*)

Why has everybody all at once become so cruel to me? (*Rising*) It 's perfectly wonderful how easy it is for the world to do without one. I used to think my being here was a pleasure to *some* people — at least to father and grandfather. But no! Not one of them cares the least when I go away. I think this is a nasty world!

HEYMANN

But it may happen at times, Miss Estrid, that a person has to sacrifice himself.

ESTRID

I don't think *you* ever did it.

HEYMANN

My purpose has always been laid within myself.

ESTRID

Yes, to make oneself important, that 's the thing! — Mother is no more ill now than she has ever been. Until now father has never been able to get her to travel. No, I just won't do it! Now I 'll go up and tell them at once, so that they 'll understand it. They can't drag me out of here, can they? What was that you said? Something about purpose —

HEYMANN

Suppose *I* should ask you to go tonight — ask you to do so for my sake.

ESTRID (*eagerly*) Are you going along, too? (*Then her own question fills her with embarrassment*)

HEYMANN (*smiling*)

No, I stay.

ESTRID

That superior smile is not at all becoming to you.

HEYMANN

It was only an association of ideas that made me very happy.

ESTRID

You ought to be ashamed of yourself. — Will you answer me honestly: what are they trying to do with me?

HEYMANN

It would be hard for me to tell you in a rush like this. Why, somebody may come at any moment. But I *beg* of you: do this, not for anybody else's sake, but for my sake!

ESTRID

All right, then. I 'll submit — for your sake.

HEYMANN

Thank you. When the time comes, I shall explain what you have done for me.

ESTRID (*lingering*)

Then I 'll go up and pack. Good-bye!

HEYMANN

Good-bye!

ESTRID

You are looking so strangely at me.

HEYMANN

I am thinking of the fact that what neither your father nor your grandfather could get you to do, you are now doing because I asked you.

ESTRID (*casually*)

It 's stupid of me, I suppose.

HEYMANN (*somewhat disappointed*)

Well, good luck on your trip, then!

ESTRID

Now you have that strange look again.

HEYMANN

Will you promise to think of me now and then out there —

ESTRID

I cannot quite make you out, Mr. Heymann. Sometimes I think you are nice, and sometimes I think you are just as bad as — what shall I say? — as a cat playing with a mouse.

HEYMANN

And yet I am about to commit a great folly at this moment —

ESTRID (*misunderstanding him*)

Oh, you don't commit any follies, Mr. Heymann.

HEYMANN

It seems all at once as if I were buying high and selling low — and that is something a business man hardly . . .

ESTRID

I don't understand what you mean.

HEYMANN

No — there is something I must tell you before you go. (*Looks at her lovingly*)

ESTRID (*closing her eyes and putting one hand to her forehead, she says in little more than a whisper*)
Tell it!

HEYMANN
I love you.
[*With sudden abandon of all resistance, Estrid throws her arms around his neck.*

HEYMANN (*caressing her hair*)
Essie dear!

ESTRID
Oh, you should n't say that yet, Mist — George! — Please say it again!

ESTRID
Essie, my dear little girl!

ESTRID (*tearing herself loose*)
Grandfather must know this.

HEYMANN
So he shall, but not at once. We must wait a while yet.

ESTRID
Why?

HEYMANN
There is something I have to arrange first.

ESTRID
What is it?

HEYMANN
A great plan in regard to the business, which I must get your father to approve, and it might happen that he opposed it in the last moment.

ESTRID
Yes, but if you only tell him —

HEYMANN
But to use my new position in this house is just what I *don't* want —

ESTRID
But why not?

HEYMANN
Come here and let me whisper it to you.
[*Estrid nestles close to him.*

HEYMANN
Because I love you so much. I don't want to have you mixed up in our week-day affairs.

ESTRID
I suppose it must be right when you say so, you who are so clever. — But I must go after all?

HEYMANN
I am afraid you must. But I think I can explain the whole matter to you before you leave. Will you promise me one thing, Estrid?

ESTRID
Thousands of things!

HEYMANN
Will you continue to love me, no matter what happens in this house today?

ESTRID
Hush!
[*Mrs. Lynggaard enters from the dining-room and stops in surprise at seeing Estrid and Heymann all by themselves.*

ESTRID (*assuming a tone of indifference*)
Well, good-bye, Mr. Heymann, and take care of yourself. I suppose we won't see each other again before I leave. (*Holding out her hand to him*)

HEYMANN (*in a similar tone*)
I hardly think so, Miss Lynggaard. I hope you 'll enjoy the trip.

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*to Estrid*)

May I ask where *you* are going?

ESTRID

With you and Jacob, of course. I decided, after all, to go along.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

May I ask who has made this arrangement?

ESTRID

Oh, father is bound to have it that way.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Is that so? Will you do me the favor, Estrid, to ask your father to come here at once? He is in grandfather's room.

[*Estrid goes out through the dining-room. Mrs. Lynggaard rings for the Servant, who enters a moment later.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*to the Servant*)

Please ask my son to come here at once.

[*The Servant goes out. Pause.*

HEYMANN (*taking up the portfolio*)

Perhaps you would rather see that I waited in your husband's room, madam?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

On the contrary, I prefer that you remain here.

HEYMANN

As you wish.

[*Pause. Lynggaard enters from the left. Scenting a storm, he makes straight for Heymann.*

LYNGGAARD

Oh, my dear Heymann, I hear you have been waiting ever so long. Why did n't you send for me?

HEYMANN

It did n't matter at all. I have had excellent company.

[*Jacob enters from the hall.*

LYNGGAARD

Is that the protocol concerning the organization?

HEYMANN

It is.

LYNGGAARD

That 's splendid. Suppose we go into my room.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Peter, I should like to say a word before you and Mr. Heymann go.

LYNGGAARD

Well, Heymann, step into my room for a moment.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

What I have to say concerns Mr. Heymann too.

LYNGGAARD (*alarmed*)

What is it, my dear?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Only this — that if you think you can get out of this by sending Estrid with me, you are very much mistaken.

LYNGGAARD (*unpleasantly impressed*)

My dear Harriet, it has not been our custom to settle family affairs in the presence of outsiders.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

No, we have n't done so, but if we have to do it now, you know very well with whom the fault lies. Even in such a matter as this idea of giving me Estrid for company, I can discern Mr. Heymann's conduct of the business. And that 's something you would never have discovered for yourself, Peter.

LYNGGAARD (*irately*)

What are you talking of?

HEYMANN (*speaking simultaneously with Lynggaard*)

Madam —!

LYNGGAARD

I have to apologize to you on account of this painful scene. My wife is overwrought and extremely nervous these days, I am sorry to say.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

You may spare all your apologies. But one thing is certain: Estrid must be kept outside of all this!

LYNGGAARD

You don't know, Harriet, how painful all this is to me —

MRS. LYNGGAARD

It is n't any less painful to me. But it has to be said. (*Raising her voice*) And now I ask you for the last time, Peter: for whom do you care more — your son and your wife, or that strange gentleman over there?

LYNGGAARD

But that question is a piece of insanity, Harriet — sheer insanity!

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*with increasing force*)

There is the protocol that was to be signed. All right. If you throw it into the fire at once, so that I can see it burn, then you 'll save what can still be saved of our relationship. If not, then it 's all over — all over. But, you understand, I want to *see* it burn!

LYNGGAARD (*his voice showing serious concern*)

My dear Heymann, my wife's trouble is more serious than I thought. Please telephone and call off the

meeting. You 'll have to ask them to pardon us for postponing it on such short notice. Things have happened within my family — of such a nature that it is impossible. Will you do me that favor?

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*stepping in between*)

No postponements! Now or never! I want to see that protocol burn!

LYNGGAARD (*trying to calm her*)

My dear Harriet, you are not well —

JACOB

Don't let us carry matters to an extreme, mother. There is a whole lot to be gained by a postponement.

HEYMANN

I agree completely with Mrs. Lynggaard. This matter will not bear a postponement. You 'll have to decide at once, on the spot!

LYNGGAARD (*suddenly assuming an air of superiority*)

I want the matter postponed.

HEYMANN

I did n't think I should have to remind you of it, my dear Lynggaard. For you ought to know just as well as I, that this decision means life or death to the entire business.

LYNGGAARD

I don't know anything of the kind.

HEYMANN

But you have to admit —

LYNGGAARD

I admit nothing at all.

HEYMANN

All right, then. Let it go at that. I have only to point out to you then, that as soon as you abandon the plan of forming a company, which we have now

had in preparation for six months, then I feel compelled to resign at once. A business conducted by your wife and son, that is something on which I cannot base my future.

LYNGGAARD

Conducted by my wife and son —?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

There you see, Peter! The whole thing is nothing but purely selfish speculation!

HEYMANN

Of course. What in the world could I base my actions on, if not on purely selfish speculations? Can you tell me that?

JACOB

There *are* nobler motives in life, Mr. Heymann, but perhaps *you* are not aware of them.

HEYMANN

Will you please name them?

JACOB

The sacrifice of oneself for greater purposes is one of them.

HEYMANN

Well, that kind of luxuries may be afforded by you and those who, like you, have been *born* to a position and who have never had to fight for their existence. But I, who have raised myself from the very bottom to where I am now — I have had nothing but myself and my own ends to cling to. And besides, that 's something *you* have good reason to be thankful for.

LYNGGAARD

My dear Heymann, don't let us push the matter too far. I should regret to have this day break up a

relationship that has lasted many years and that I may even speak of as one of personal friendship.

HEYMANN

I should regret it, too. But in the situation facing us at this moment, there is more, much more involved than either you or your wife seem to suspect.

LYNGGAARD

What do you mean by that?

HEYMANN

For that reason I think it better, under existing circumstances, to let you know the entire scope and bearing of the matter. And if I have not done so before, it was because I thought it to the advantage of all parties concerned that I kept back as much as I have. But, of course, we can't stand here like children talking back and forth about a thing we don't understand. So I must ask you to listen quietly to me for a few moments. — You are familiar with the manner in which, during recent years, we have had to compete with the Consolidated Distilleries. When, at one time, they approached us for the purpose of an agreement about minimum prices on all products, you rejected their overtures scornfully — I don't even think you answered them.

LYNGGAARD

Of course not.

HEYMANN

I don't know if that was such a matter of course — but that 's what you did anyhow. I had nothing to do with the matter — you did n't even ask my advice at the time.

LYNGGAARD

It was out of the question for the firm of Lynggaard

to act as if it recognized, or even suspected, the existence of such robbers.

HEYMANN

But a little later their existence was brought home to us pretty hard.

LYNGGAARD

It 's all a question of time, my dear fellow. How long do you think they can keep it going?

HEYMANN (*with a shrug of his shoulders*)

That 's exactly what I wanted to let you know now. Last year, about this time, I received from the Consolidated Distilleries an offer of the position as managing director.

LYNGGAARD

What! And you never told me a word about it?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

There you can hear. It 's getting better and better!

HEYMANN

I refused their offer.

LYNGGAARD

Oh, of course — the only thing wanting would have been that you had accepted it, too.

HEYMANN

I don't know what gives you the right to take that for granted.

LYNGGAARD

I consider it the meanest form of competition that I have ever heard of in all my days. To undersell, to overbid, to bribe — oh, the devil take it!

HEYMANN

It seems to me that your remarks are not, what I might say, quite to the point. Mercy, man, neither of us was born yesterday, I guess! And we know

that morality is one thing and business morality another.

LYNGGAARD

I think, Heymann, that their offer was nothing less than an insult to you. To suspect you of forgetting all that you owe this firm . . .

HEYMANN

I don't owe you anything whatever, my dear Lynggaard. The moment I leave here, it will be you who are in debt to me.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Well, I declare!

LYNGGAARD

I must say! — You seem to forget, my dear Heymann, that you were nothing but a student just out of college when you began your career here way down at the bottom; that in the course of fifteen years you have been promoted year after year; that you have outstripped everybody else until you now hold a position of higher responsibility than anybody else in the business.

HEYMANN

I have not at all forgotten, Mr. Lynggaard. But I hope you don't think me blind to the fact that this dazzling advancement was granted me out of regard not for me, but for yourself. You had a use for me, and you have used me — and there is nothing to be said against that. — However, I refused that offer which, financially, was quite attractive, and very flattering besides — although this is something I don't put much stress on — for as a rule a man gets more appreciation from those with whom he is not connected. In reply to my refusal they told me I can

have the position any time I care to take it. Which means that if I so choose, I can become managing director of the Consolidated Distilleries at this very moment.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Are you going to stand that, Peter?

LYNGGAARD

Is that a threat?

HEYMANN

Now you are underestimating me, my dear Lynggaard. When I refused that offer last year, and did n't even use it to make my position here more independent and more remunerative —

LYNGGAARD

I don't think you have any reason to complain of your salary, Heymann!

HEYMANN

Oh, don't let us waste words on the trifling sums that I have received from time to time.

LYNGGAARD

Trifling sums! The salary of a cabinet minister!

HEYMANN

Well, if you must enter on that question, Lynggaard, then I think that, if the account between us were balanced — on one side what you have paid out to me, and on the other what I have brought the firm of added income during the same time — then I think you would be owing me a small fortune. But please don't let us waste time on that kind of useless consideration. — When I refused that offer, I did so because I had more far-reaching plans.

LYNGGAARD

Dare I ask what those great plans were?

HEYMANN

Yes, my plan had in mind the combination of *all* the big distilleries into one business.

LYNGGAARD

I thought that was what the others proposed.

HEYMANN

To complete the trust and control the entire market, we lack — the Lynggaard Distilleries.

LYNGGAARD (*thunderstruck*)

The Lynggaard Distilleries! Do you hear that — the Lynggaard Distilleries! You must have lost your reason, Heymann. That 's — why, that 's sheer megalomania!

HEYMANN

I foresaw that you would take it in that way, Lynggaard, and it is just to make the transition as easy as possible for you, that we are to form a stock company this afternoon.

LYNGGAARD

If the whole matter did n't strike me as ludicrous, Heymann, I might be tempted into using some pretty strong expressions about you and your behavior.

HEYMANN

Ludicrous is not the word for it, Lynggaard — the situation is too tremendous. You see, all this I wanted to spare you, and out of personal devotion to you, I chose a rather circuitous approach instead of making straight for my goal. Once we had got to the stock company, then I thought that the next step — our entrance into the trust — would not seem such a great leap. And if I am now forced to lay open the entire project in a single stroke, the

fault is not mine — it is your wife who has to bear the responsibility.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Peter!

JACOB (*speaking at the same time as his mother*)

Have n't you had enough of this, father?

LYNGGAARD

It is really touching, Heymann!

HEYMANN

But even as the matter stands at present, you may perhaps be able to see that *I* am the master of the situation, and not you: that it is for me to decide *when* we shall buy out your business, and how much we shall pay for it.

LYNGGAARD

But we won't sell, my dear boy, we won't sell. The Lynggaard Distilleries are not a piece of merchandise. The Lynggaard Distilleries are — they are an institution, a sort of inalienable inheritance.

HEYMANN

Nevertheless it would be better for you to think it all over again while I am still here. For personally I should find it very unpleasant if some day I had to give you the choice between selling out and getting crushed.

LYNGGAARD (*beside himself, pointing at the door*)

Mr. Heymann!

HEYMANN

As you please. (*He throws the portfolio on the table*) There you are! Good-bye! (*Goes out to the right*)

CURTAIN

THE FOURTH ACT

The same room about five o'clock in the afternoon.

Lynggaard is standing in the middle of the floor, busily engaged in relating what has happened. Mikkelsen is seated in an easy-chair near the table at the left. He is deeply interested and evidently enjoying the tale.

LYNGGAARD

Well, that 's how it happened. And how does a thing like that *come* to happen? One word leads to another. One, two, three — and it *has* happened.

MIKKELSEN

It means, then, that the softheads are in control . . .

LYNGGAARD

Don't you believe it! If you do, you don't know me very well. And if Harriet and Jacob imagine anything of the kind, they 'll find themselves mistaken. (*In a superior tone*) But they will soon be made acquainted with the situation, which involves a great deal more than they suspect. — No, now as ever there is only one will that rules, namely my own. . . . But nevertheless it provokes me to have that blatherskite come prancing around here as if he were in a position to threaten me.

MIKKELSEN

Did you part irreconcilably?

LYNGGAARD (*as if sampling the taste of the word*)

Irreconcilably? You know how I am. I lose my

temper — but I don't carry a grudge. After a couple of days I have forgotten all about it.

MIKKELSEN

So it did n't come to a final breach between you?

LYNGGAARD

Oh, don't you understand, it 's that sort of a situation — afterwards it 's impossible to recall the exact details. Perhaps I *did* act rather overbearingly toward him — for really I could n't take him quite seriously, and, of course, he was feeling a little squashed when he left.

MIKKELSEN

I see. Well, my experience is that you should never in the world let it come to an actual breach. It means nothing but a throwing away of your most powerful weapons.

LYNGGAARD

But what provoked me most — and, of course, made it pretty hard to keep my temper — was when he came to *me*, who has taught him the business, and bragged about his great plan, as he called it — and then it proved to be nothing but a good old idea of my own.

MIKKELSEN (*completely surprised*)

Have *you* been thinking of a greater combination?

LYNGGAARD

I have not been thinking of anything else for the last two years, my dear sir. The stock company was to be the first step, don't you know —

MIKKELSEN

I must say that I could never have believed it. Well, well! — Have you ever confided your plans to him?

LYNGGAARD

I suppose I must have been dropping hints.

MIKKELSEN

Well, well. Otherwise I thought that your principal idea was to keep the family name alive among future generations. The name of Lynggaard —

LYNGGAARD

And for that very reason it was to be: "The Consolidated Distilleries, Lynggaard & Co."

MIKKELSEN

Really, that is n't bad!

LYNGGAARD

And then that bungler comes here and wants to spoil the whole thing for me. I have to admit — *that* was the hardest blow of all.

MIKKELSEN

Yes, I can understand that. He would be capable of calling it Heymann & Co.

LYNGGAARD

But now we 'll show our little Heymann a thing or two.

MIKKELSEN

Yes, it will be very exciting.

LYNGGAARD

It 's clear that I have largely myself to blame. I gave him too much of my confidence. Toward the last there was n't a detail of the business with which I had not acquainted him. And, of course, that was an error. You ought never to have anything but specialists around you — as many specialists as possible. It 's more than a fellow like that can stand. And in the end he thinks himself indispensable — and so he jumps the traces.

MIKKELSEN

Of course, Heymann *did* prove himself very capable. And I suppose you 'll feel the competition when he goes over to the others. For after all, it was he who kept them at bay in the past.

LYNGGAARD

That 's what they have in mind, of course, but those gentlemen forget that in the past they had only Heymann to reckon with, and now they 'll find *me* at the helm!

MIKKELSEN

Oh, yes, that does make a difference. — However, in one respect you do Heymann wrong.

LYNGGAARD

In which respect?

MIKKELSEN

I had a talk with him a short while ago —

LYNGGAARD

Have you — have you talked with him after —?

MIKKELSEN

This was before the smash-up.

LYNGGAARD (*with disappointment*)

Oh.

MIKKELSEN

Part of what he said seemed rather obscure to me at the time, and it is only now I can grasp the full implication of his words. We were just speaking about the name of Lynggaard. And it seems to me that there was a great deal of sense in what he said. For three generations now, he said, the name of Lynggaard has stood for unlimited confidence on the Exchange, while in the history of the country it has stood for the ascendancy of the great middle class.

But with you, Lynggaard — and those were his own words — the name has reached its culmination.

LYNGGAARD

Possibly! And it won't be easy to carry on the task I leave behind me.

MIKKELSEN

In the future, he said, family names will cease to count. The industrial form of the future will be the stock company and the trust. And just for that reason he thought that you ought to end monumentally, so to speak. And in memory of the family that has reached its climax in you, and also in memory of that phase of universal history of which you form the culminating point, he wanted to build a museum on publicly owned ground, bearing the name of Lynggaard in golden letters above the entrance.

LYNGGAARD

And the money?

MIKKELSEN

That 's what I asked, but that one-half of a million more or less did n't seem to bother him. Oh, dear me, in a case like this, where such tremendous values are involved, all that 's needed is the rounding-off of a sum here and there to produce your extra one-half of a million. Of course, you don't reckon with decimal fractions in the promoting of stock companies. — Well, the idea is, after all, your own. The Lynggaard Distilleries, which have sprung from the labors performed by three generations in the service of their country, he said further — they cannot be valued in money. Even if you fixed the sum at this or that, without stinting it, there would nevertheless remain a certain *debt of honor*. There is something

about it which cannot be repaid in money — something like the debt which a nation incurs toward a great and rare artist.

LYNGGAARD

That 's exactly what I have felt myself. [*Pause.*

MIKKELSEN

I thought it was my duty to tell you about this — just now.

LYNGGAARD

It 's perfectly right, all of it — if only he had not lost his head.

[*Mikkelsen shrugs his shoulders. Pause.*

MIKKELSEN

And how about the strike? What bearing will all this have on the strike?

LYNGGAARD

The strike? Oh, it will be on at six o'clock — I should be very much mistaken if that does n't prove Heymann's first move against me.

MIKKELSEN

Yes, he 's devilishly clever, that fellow. — Where 's Harriet?

LYNGGAARD

She has gone to the Good Samaritan. It 's to be opened today.

MIKKELSEN

Yes, that 's the way of the world. As one door is slammed, another is thrown open. At six you close the shop to your workmen; at seven she serves them hot supper.

[*The telephone rings in Lynggaard's room.*

LYNGGAARD

The telephone!

MIKKELSEN (*rising*)

Don't let me keep you. I 'll go up and rest a little before dinner.

[*Lynggaard goes into his room. Mikkelsen goes out through the dining-room. A few moments later Mrs. Lynggaard and Jacob enter from the hall. Lynggaard comes back from his room.*

LYNGGAARD (*letting his face drop into folds of fatigue at the sight of his family*) Oh, there you are!

MRS. LYNGGAARD

How are you, dear? You look so tired.

LYNGGAARD (*with the looks of a martyr*)

Please don't mind me.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Don't you think it was a perfect miracle that he was forced to show his true colors at last?

LYNGGAARD

Indeed.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

I assure you, I feel more at ease than I have done in many and many a year. It seems positively as if once more the air in our home had become fit to breathe.

LYNGGAARD

Yes, if we could only live on air, Harriet.

JACOB

You 'll see, father, that when all of us take hold and work together, you and mother and I —

MRS. LYNGGAARD

I am so thankful that your eyes have been opened at last, Peter. I only thought you dealt too gently with him.

LYNGGAARD

Yes, you talk and you are happy — if only the service you have rendered me does n't prove a little awkward, my dear friends.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

I shall never regret what I have done, Peter! Never! And some day you will thank me for it.

JACOB

Did n't you hear, father, that you and the business meant nothing to him, and his own lust of power everything? It seems to me that what cleverness he has is like a two-edged sword.

LYNGGAARD

What is done, is done, and I am perfectly ready to shoulder the blame, but nevertheless I regret it. — The fact of it is, that I — at least in the last few years — have been a solitary man in my own home. And the terrible consequences of it have been brought home to me today.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

It is n't my fault that you have n't trusted me, Peter. *I* have warned you against him these last ten years. So in that respect my conscience is at peace.

LYNGGAARD

Warned, warned! Don't you think, Harriet, that I can see for myself? I saw a whole lot more than you — but I closed my eyes to it.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Then I don't understand you at all, Peter.

LYNGGAARD

I saw everything, Harriet. I saw, as the years went by, that I should have no successor within my own family. I don't want to say anything against you,

Jacob, but one who is a dreamer and a visionary cannot conduct a big business when the competition demands that the man at the head wake up keen and bright every blessed morning. I saw that Heymann was a man of future, and I tried to tie him to my service by the strongest interests possible.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

And he has abused your trust in him shamefully.

LYNGGAARD

Not shamefully. If he did abuse my trust, he did so with great tact and consideration — that much I must grant him. Every improvement he made — he always let it appear that it was *my* plan he was carrying out, and he did so without a wink. He always let me feel that I was master of my own house, and that is a feeling one learns to appreciate when each passing year makes it clearer that the fact has turned into a fiction. He was as considerate — as a son should be toward his old father.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

That you can still be so deceived —!

LYNGGAARD

Then you and Jacob, my wife and son, pushed in like two outsiders who don't understand. I don't reproach you — but I 'll tell you what it was you did, for I don't think the truth of it has ever occurred to you. You forced us — Heymann and myself — to unmask. Just that — to unmask — which was something we had never done before, not even between ourselves. (*Pause*) If it had n't come to this smash-up, then, you see, *I* should have had a care-free old age, and you, too, would have been provided for when I died. For appearance's sake, Jacob, I sent

you abroad to study the conditions out there. I did n't expect much to come out of it, but I wanted so badly to have one of my own name among those at the head, even if there could only be a semblance of reason for his presence. There you have the ins and outs of it! — In a few years I shall be an old man. And, of course, it is a little hard at my age to have, once more, to pick up something to which I have actually been a stranger for years. But I shall do it without complaint —

JACOB

You call me a dreamer and a visionary —

LYNGGAARD

You are twenty-five, Jacob, but I have not yet seen you produce the equal of our smallest coin in value.

JACOB

Well, if it depends on that, father, then it seems to me that you yourself have been a dreamer and a visionary, too. What has been the aim of your life? Not to produce anything of value — I guess years have passed since you did anything of the kind, and you have n't needed it either. Has not your aim been to gather beauty within your own walls? All this beauty you have gathered here — does it not represent the dream of your life? I, too, have my dream — to create human happiness. So I fear that either one of us is just as much a dreamer as the other.

LYNGGAARD (*almost flattered, but still speaking in a melancholy tone*) Perhaps you are right, my boy. Perhaps I am also a dreamer and a visionary. All right. Then I 'll sacrifice my dream to yours. Go ahead — the business is yours.

JACOB

What do you mean, father?

LYNGGAARD

Everything is ready for the sacrifice — everything. You may sell every scrap of my collection if it will enable you to buy human happiness.

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*admiringly*)

Peter!

LYNGGAARD (*waving aside her approval by a discreet movement of his hand*) For the present I think we shall have our hands full keeping our heads above water. For now, children, there will be war to the hilt — something we have n't had before. At six o'clock the strike begins.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

The strike!

LYNGGAARD

Yes, I have just received a telephone message. The negotiations with the men have been broken off.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

That is Heymann, of course —

LYNGGAARD

Yes, that 's Heymann. It is his first blow. [*Pause.*

JACOB

What does this strike mean to us, father?

LYNGGAARD

To begin with, it means one thousand crowns a day out of my pocket.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

And the men — think what it will mean to the men, Peter! And think of the relations between them and us — strife and hatred where there might be good-will and mutual understanding.

JACOB

It must be stopped!

LYNGGAARD

How are you going to stop it?

JACOB

Are the demands of the men so unreasonable, then? Are they impossible to meet?

LYNGGAARD

They are unreasonable because they are impossible. Under existing conditions absolutely impossible. Even if I should overlook the fact that I am bound by the action taken recently by the employers' organization — suppose, I say, that I overlook this, and accede to the demands of the men — then it might still be possible to come out ahead, in spite of the low prices our products are now bringing. But the moment I did so, Heymann's next move would be to press down the prices still further, and the result would simply be that we had to run at a loss. That 's life!

JACOB

But it ought to be possible to explain this to the men.

LYNGGAARD

Explain to the men? Do you think they are moved by reason and insight? No, they merely take orders from headquarters. Of course, if you could get them to break away from their union — but the man who can do that is not yet born. No, my boy, there are things in this world that are impossible.

JACOB

I am going to try the impossible!

LYNGGAARD

Are you crazy?

JACOB

I am going to them. I 'll speak to them. Speak like a comrade. Explain the circumstances to them as they are. Say to them: this is how it is, my friends. If you 'll be patient and give us time, so that together we carry the load and the loss through this critical period, then you shall also share in the reward of the struggle when the day of prosperity comes. Just let me talk to them. I know what words can achieve with them. Did n't I see it at Birnbach? I 'll explain all my plans for the future to them. We shall come to have a position all apart. We shall be at the head of the onward march. You 'll see that they 'll understand. For it will be a question of helping to build up their own future.

LYNGGAARD

I don't believe they 'll understand a word of the whole matter.

JACOB

I can feel that I shall succeed. For as I am going to speak, no one has ever spoken to them. No one belonging to our side. And you can be sure it will impress them to discover that what I have to say is n't mere wind, but that it rests on a strong and clear vision of the future.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Let him try it, Peter. No employer has ever spoken to them like that — like one human being to another.

JACOB

You 'll see that we are going to understand each other, they and I. Did n't I see how those fellows

at Birnbach were affected — and yet the speaker was only a man out of their own midst. I shall tell them about that meeting at Birnbach. I shall make the bond between us so strong —

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Do it, Jacob. They 'll be touched by your enthusiasm. They 'll feel that you mean well with them.

JACOB

You 'll see that it is possible, father. In one stroke I 'll tear Heymann's entire net of intrigue to pieces.

LYNGGAARD

I am a whole lifetime ahead of you in the study of this world, my boy, and I have my doubts. But go ahead and do what you want. My best wishes go with you.

JACOB

Never before have I felt such faith in myself. If this strike were a mountain, I think I could move it. (*Goes out to the right*)

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*enraptured*)

This is the greatest moment of my life

[*Pause. Mrs. Lynggaard sits down at the table at the right. She lets one arm rest across the table, on which her fingers are drumming softly, while her gaze is lost in contemplation of her own thoughts. Lynggaard walks to and fro. After a time a loud altercation is heard from the hall. The Servant opens the door and tries to keep Edward Olsen out in order to get a chance to announce him, but the latter pushes him aside and steps right into the room.*

LYNGGAARD

Who are you?

OLSEN

So you don't know me, Mr. Lynggaard?

LYNGGAARD

I don't understand — for whom are you looking?

OLSEN

Perhaps you, madam, will do me the honor of introducing my humble person to Mr. Lynggaard?

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*who has risen*)

I don't know if I 'm right — are you not Edward Olsen — Mr. Olsen, I mean?

OLSEN

Edward, yes — let us stick to that name for the present.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

It 's Mrs. Olsen's son, Peter.

LYNGGAARD

Mrs. Olsen?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

The widow of Olsen, don't you know?

OLSEN

Exactly. You are perfectly right, madam. It is always better to say no more than one knows to be true. Son of Mrs. Olsen, widow of Olsen — perfectly right. — However, it looks as if Mr. Lynggaard were not very pleased at seeing the first-born of Mrs. Olsen once more.

LYNGGAARD

If you want to see me, you 'll have to do so at the office, and not here. They 'll tell you over there when I am to be seen.

OLSEN

I have nothing to hide, Mr. Lynggaard. The presence of your wife is no embarrassment to *me*.

LYNGGAARD (*as he is about to ring for the Servant*)
I think, my dear man, you had better —

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*stopping her husband and giving him a sign*) What 's on your mind, Edward Olsen? You look as if you were troubled by something.

OLSEN
Right you are, madam. I have something very serious on my mind, if I may presume so far as to demand your attention for a few moments.

MRS. LYNGGAARD
Sit down, please.

OLSEN (*seating himself*)
Of course, I could n't possibly fail to notice — and I am a pretty sharp observer, if I may say so myself — that during my upbringing and further education, certain more or less valuable contributions came to my mother — and as such I continue to regard Mrs. Olsen — from this house.

LYNGGAARD
What 's the meaning of that?

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*with a wink at her husband*)
Oh, nothing to speak of, Peter — mere trifles.

OLSEN
Perhaps you are thinking of cast-off clothes and such things. No, if that had been all — but my mother also received contributions in cash, Mr. Lynggaard. She was forced to acknowledge it herself a while ago, when I examined her.

LYNGGAARD
If that 's so, I don't think you have the least reason to be embarrassed by it, Mr. Olsen.

OLSEN (*rising*)

Sometimes they give a very unsavory name to that kind of contributions, Mr. Lynggaard.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

If you think that your mother has been taking alms, and if it 's that which is troubling you, then I must say that the little money in question was n't alms, but must be regarded from a wholly different viewpoint, Mr. Olsen.

OLSEN

I think so, too, madam — from a wholly different viewpoint. And when I put together the money received and the somewhat privileged position which I, the first-born of Mrs. Olsen, was granted during my upbringing and further education — I won't say in this house, but in the vicinity of it — then perhaps some other name than alms might be found much more fitting, Mr. Lynggaard.

LYNGGAARD

Before your hot-headedness gets entirely away with you, my dear man, you had better tell us in plain words what you want. I hope you understand that we have other things to do than to waste time on that kind of conundrums.

OLSEN

All right. I have come here in all friendliness to ask you, sir, and you, madam, to tell me whose son I am.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

What in the world has made you come here and ask that all of a sudden?

OLSEN

A great deal depends on the answer to that question. I have made a sacred vow, and this is to settle whether

I am still bound by it or may hold myself released from it. For *I* don't intend to repeat the tragedy of Spartacus after having become acquainted with the latest conclusions of science!

[*The ensuing dumb play between Lynggaard and Mrs. Lynggaard indicates that they consider him out of his reason.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD

I think you had better go home to your mother, Mr. Olsen. She will tell you, I am sure.

OLSEN

She 'll only squirm out of it, I know. That 's what they all do in such cases. I had an idea of bringing her along for the sake of confrontation — but she would n't come.

LYNGGAARD (*putting his hand on Olsen's shoulder*)

Now, young fellow, you had better get out of here while everybody is good-tempered.

OLSEN

Keep your advice to yourself, Mr. Lynggaard. I don't mean to stir from the spot until you tell me whose son I am.

LYNGGAARD

Well, you are not *my* son, at any rate. So you can now pass on the question to the next man —

OLSEN

Are you ready to take oath on that?

LYNGGAARD

Yes, hang it, I am. But that will have to be enough now.

OLSEN

Then, madam, will you please explain those contributions of money? — Don't you see that you can't!

MRS. LYNGGAARD

As you insist. You probably know that your father came to an unhappy end —

OLSEN

Olsen was found hanging from a tree.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

For that reason I have, out of my own pocket, paid your mother a small widow's pension. That 's all.

OLSEN

Then I *am* the son of Olsen —?

LYNGGAARD

I presume so.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Of course you are the son of Olsen.

OLSEN

All right. Then I know where I stand. Thank you! That was all I came for. So he who died the martyr's death was my father after all. Thou shalt be avenged, father! (*Hurries out to the right*)

LYNGGAARD

That was a horrid story, Harriet. Was n't that the chap who was sent to jail?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

He has just come out. (*She sits down as before*)

LYNGGAARD

He 's as crazy as a loon. Don't you think it 's our duty to do something about it, Harriet? I mean, to try to help his mother get him into some institution?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Unfortunately, I don't think he 's as crazy as he appears.

LYNGGAARD

Unfortunately, you say?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Yes, I say unfortunately.

LYNGGAARD

What do you mean, dear?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

I mean — tell me, Peter, do you think it 's possible to cause actual harm by being good to other people? Do you think that by trying to help them, one may come to meddle in an arbitrary and harmful manner with other people's destinies, so that everything goes wrong for them?

LYNGGAARD

All charity should be open. But really, I don't understand what you have in mind?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

I 'll explain further some other time, when I have n't got so much else to think of —

[*Brief silence. Then a deafening hubbub is heard from the direction in which the distilleries are: loud yelling, scornful laughter and shrill whistlings.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*jumps up in a fright*)

What is it?

[*Lynggaard runs to the window. The noise is renewed.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD

For heaven's sake, what *is* it?

LYNGGAARD

There is nothing to be seen.

ESTRID (*comes running from the dining-room*)

What is up, anyhow?

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*hurrying toward the door*)

Jacob — it must be Jacob —!

LYNGGAARD (*stopping her*)
You must n't! I 'll —

MIKKELSEN (*enters from the left*)
What is happening at the plant?
[*Jacob returns, pale with emotion.*

MRS. LYNGGAARD
Jacob — what *is* it?

JACOB (*after a brief pause*)
They just howled me down.
[*The ensuing pause is vibrant with suppressed feeling.*

ESTRID
What did you go over for, Jacob?

JACOB (*sits down in a state of utter dejection*)
Don't ask me.

LYNGGAARD (*to Estrid and Mikkelsen*)
Jacob wanted to talk reason into the men.

MRS. LYNGGAARD
And they hissed you?

JACOB
Yes.

MRS. LYNGGAARD
Who did it?

JACOB
Everybody. One began. Then all the rest took it up. All of them!

LYNGGAARD
Well, now you have found out what it means.

MRS. LYNGGAARD
I sent my own son to them — and they hissed him! I can't understand — What do you think of it, Jacob?

JACOB

They were right, mother. They could n't do anything else.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Right? Never! To hiss at *my* son! At you, who went to them as a friend and ally — and they hissed you! — What are you going to do, Peter?

LYNGGAARD

What am I going to do? Nothing.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Are you not going to do anything?

LYNGGAARD (*shaking his head*)

All you can do is to close your eyes and pretend that nothing has happened. . . . They have n't hissed at me so far. But I suppose that will come next. But I can't see, Jacob, how *you* will be able to show your face among them after this.

JACOB (*meekly*)

Don't mind me, father. Do what you think right. I can see, anyhow, that I must shape my life in a different fashion.

ESTRID

Why don't you send for Heymann? *He* can handle them.

[*An embarrassed silence prevails, but the face of Mikkelsen lights up.*

ESTRID

Why are you so silent all of a sudden?

LYNGGAARD

Heymann is no longer connected with the business.

ESTRID

What is that you are saying, father?

MIKKELSEN

Don't you know that, my dear? Heymann has become managing director of the other distilleries. He has gone over to the enemy.

LYNGGAARD

I don't think it has gone that far yet. (*He begins to walk up and down*)

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Go ahead and do what you want, Peter — and what you are thinking of. Don't pay any attention to me. I no longer think myself capable of judging the conditions. I did believe that the road from one righteous human will to another was shorter than, apparently, it is —

LYNGGAARD

You talk of taking steps and taking steps! I can't see that there is any step to take. And I am to pay no attention to you! That 's very easy to say. But let me ask: has this situation been produced by me or by you? I can't see anything else to do, but to close up shop at six o'clock and then take a vacation.

MIKKELSEN

If I be permitted to express an opinion, I think Estrid has uttered the only sensible and practical word in this matter.

ESTRID

What did I say?

MIKKELSEN

You asked why Heymann was n't sent for.

LYNGGAARD

Oh, between us, you know very well how highly I esteem Heymann's ability, but you know also what

conditions Heymann would dictate if I were to send for him now.

MIKKELSEN

He would make no other conditions, Lynggaard, than to be permitted to carry out your own plans for the future.

[*Lynggaard shrugs his shoulders.*

MIKKELSEN

I really think you should hold out a friendly hand to him.

LYNGGAARD

Too late.

MIKKELSEN

Of course, —

JACOB

If you *could* do it, father — maybe there is nothing else to do from your viewpoint?

LYNGGAARD

And *you* say that?

JACOB

I do.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Do you mean it seriously, Jacob?

JACOB

Yes. And I 'll tell you why. Until now I have believed that I could reach my ideals by peaceful and conciliatory measures. I don't believe so any longer.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

What do you mean, Jacob?

JACOB

I mean that if I am to help the cause for which I am willing to sacrifice my life, then I must take sides once for all. And if I am to be understood

by those for whom I want to labor, then I must become as one of them.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Of those that hissed at you?

JACOB

Yes. For back of all that evil fire with which their eyes were aflame — back of the hatred and distrust born out of many thousand years of oppression — or call it, if you please, the plebeian's hatred of the patrician — back of all this lay nevertheless a feeling which I respect, and which I have never fully understood until now. Those people don't care to have anything *given* to them. They don't want anything for which they have to be thankful — they want to win it for themselves by *war*. And believe me, the offspring of those people will become our nobility.

MIKKELSEN

The devil, they will! — However, the boy is right. There is eternal right in what he says. War is the only known form of existence that is quite worthy of our human estate.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

I don't understand you. Is there, then, no more place in the world for pity and charity?

JACOB

I don't think there is, mother. I don't think charity ever did anything but harm in this world. *For it is charity that delays the onward march of justice.*

MIKKELSEN

Yes, it has always come in handy.

JACOB

And for that reason I must become as one of them. If they are to trust me, I must take my place among

them, and I must earn my bread as a workman does. And for that reason I cannot take over your business, father.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

I cannot tell what my share may be in all this, but from now on you must act on your own responsibility. My feeling is that I no longer can tell what is right and wrong. — But this was not the way I pictured the future to myself, Jacob. [*Pause.*

MIKKELSEN

I say: Heymann!

LYNGGAARD

Yes, you say Heymann, but what does it help? What I have to ask is this: can one of you suggest a way in which I could do what you propose without losing all my self-respect? There *are* things, damn it, which you can't do for decency's sake!

MIKKELSEN

Of course, it would n't do for *you* to go to him.

LYNGGAARD

Who could, then? There is no one else whose humiliation would give him any pleasure.

MIKKELSEN

If I be permitted — I think we should send Estrid.

LYNGGAARD

Estrid?

ESTRID

I won't do it.

MIKKELSEN (*with a sly glance at Estrid*)

If I am not very much mistaken, Estrid should be splendidly fitted for that mission.

LYNGGAARD

You don't want us to be made ridiculous, do you?

MIKKELSEN

I don't think Heymann would find it at all ridiculous, if Estrid —

ESTRID

But, grandfather!

MIKKELSEN

Don't be afraid, dear — I won't give you away.

ESTRID

Oh, but you are disgusting, grandfather!

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*having become attentive*)

What do you mean, father?

MIKKELSEN

Oh, the Lord keep my tongue! All I say is this: send Estrid, and you 'll behold miracles.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

What is it, Estrid? You do look so funny!

ESTRID

Goodness gracious, but you are an inquisitive lot!

MIKKELSEN

Oh, well, you don't need to say anything, Estrid.

ESTRID

No, because you can see it for yourself, I suppose.

LYNGGAARD

What?

ESTRID

That I am engaged to him! [*Pause.*

LYNGGAARD

En — engaged to Heymann!

ESTRID

Yes.

LYNGGAARD

Since when?

ESTRID

This afternoon.

LYNGGAARD

What time this afternoon?

ESTRID

When I asked you to come down to mother.

LYNGGAARD

So it happened *before*. . . . And it was my son-in-law I treated in such a manner! I certainly owe that man an apology — Our behavior was most improper, Harriet, absolutely improper. Harriet, don't you hear? It was our son-in-law we treated like that. (*To Estrid*) But, child, why did n't you let us know? You might have dropped a word when you called me. Of course, I thought you looked a little queer.

ESTRID

No, father, I could n't, because we are secretly engaged. For George said —

MIKKELSEN

Do you hear — she calls him George!

ESTRID

I can't call him Mr. Heymann, can I?

MIKKELSEN

Well, what was it he said, Essie, dear? What did George say?

ESTRID

Oh, mother came and interrupted us —

LYNGGAARD

There you see, Harriet, how you are always interrupting — and what did he say, Estrid?

ESTRID

I did n't quite understand. But I was not to tell

anybody about our engagement. As far as I understood him, there was to be a great change in the business, and he wanted to put it through only by making you see the good reasons for it, and therefore he did n't want to force your decision by appearing here as a son-in-law. Well, it was something like that, anyhow.

MIKKELSEN

Now, children, you can see that you have misjudged him.

LYNGGAARD

We have misjudged him shamefully. And you, Harriet, who thought he was our enemy —

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*with a sigh of resignation*)

Well, well, I suppose I was mistaken.

LYNGGAARD

You have always been mistaken in regard to that man, Harriet. You have never seen anything but selfish calculations behind everything he did.

ESTRID (*going to Mrs. Lynggaard*)

Of course, mother, I expect that he is not the man you wanted me to have.

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*deeply moved*)

I have nothing at all to say about that, my dear little girl. But at any rate I 'll — respect your choice. And the responsibility for it will have to rest upon yourself.

ESTRID (*unable to repress a smile*)

Responsibility —

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Well, what is that to smile at?

ESTRID

Oh, there was something I quite forgot when —

MIKKELSEN

Well, Estrid, how about sending for Heymann?

ESTRID

I won't do it. (*With roguish seriousness*) As a daughter of the house, I don't want to exert any pressure on him.

MRS. LYNGGAARD

And you won't have to do it, either. If anybody is to go for Heymann, that one must be me, and nobody else.

ESTRID (*falling on her neck*)

Thank you, mother, thank you!

LYNGGAARD

Are *you* going to do it?

MRS. LYNGGAARD

Yes, just let me write a few words.

[*She sits down and writes a few words on a card; then she rings for the Servant and asks him to deliver it.*

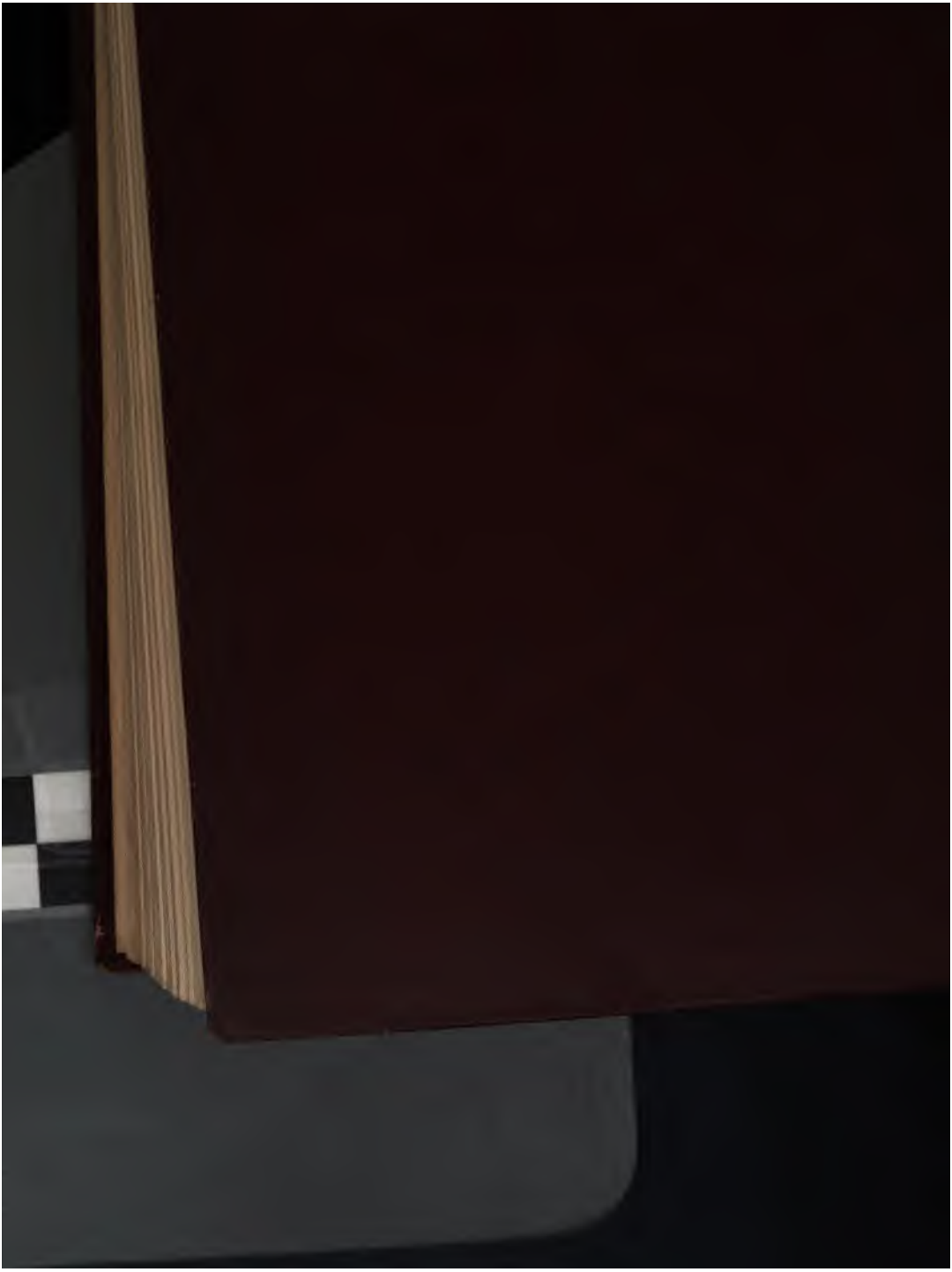
LYNGGAARD

And do you also think he 'll come on your invitation?

MRS. LYNGGAARD (*with emphasis*)

Yes, he will!

ESTRID

Hush, what 's that?

[*Cheering is heard in the distance. Then singing that keeps time with the approaching tramp-tramp of many feet. It is the men who are leaving the plant in a body while singing, "The day is dawning, comrades." Mrs. Lynggaard shrinks in fear from the sound. Jacob, who has been lost in his own thoughts, goes to the window and gazes wistfully at the throng*